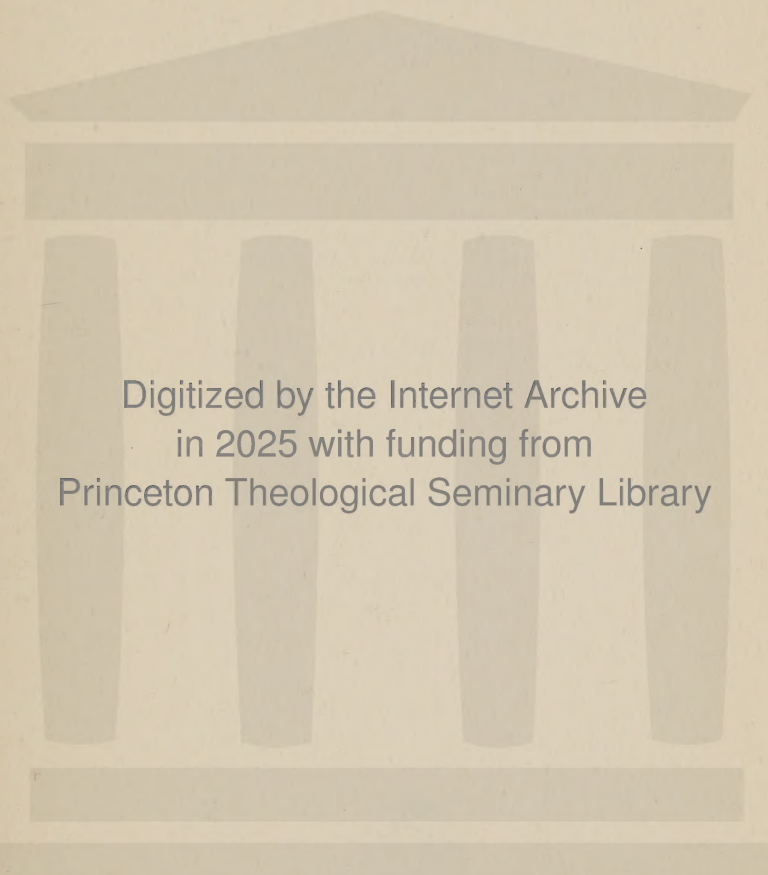


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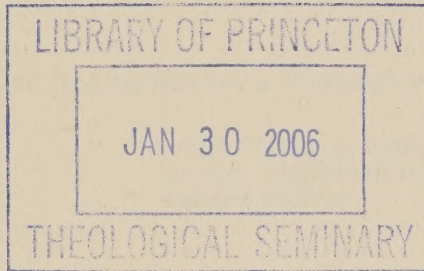


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NETTIE FOWLER McCORMICK

By

STELLA VIRGINIA RODERICK



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A good life shall be fragrant for a thousand years

—Old Chinese proverb, sent
to Mrs. McCormick on her
eightieth birthday

PREFACE

IT was Mrs. McCormick's practice to keep all papers that came to her—letters of every type from the humblest appeal to the most important business letters and the notes of the great who were her friends; also a wide and interesting range of printed matter. Included were advertisements of several decades, numberless clippings made by her or on her order, pamphlets of all kinds, and the literature of institutions by the hundreds. Many letters representing her chief interests were filed. Packages tied with tape or ribbon, kept in special places, held personal letters of her early days. There were papers in all kinds of arrangement or none. Held apart, where no one knew of them, were her journals, in twelve volumes, which covered intermittently the years from 1850 to 1896; and the journal of her cousin Ermina Merick (1851-1860). There was treasure in a little locked trunk—letters of her ancestors and elder relatives, of her father, mother, and brother. Most prized of all was a precious packet of her husband's love letters to her. Her own writings include a large number of copies or drafts in her hand and memoranda innumerable on scraps of paper.

It is from her vast collection of papers that this account of Nettie Fowler McCormick's life was principally drawn, in the long process of organizing and studying them. They have been supplemented, however, by more than two hundred interviews with those who knew her in various relations, and the written recollections of two hundred more; by her letters collected from many recipients; by church and school records. Her sons Cyrus H. and Harold F. McCormick added extensively from their own files. They, and their sister, Mrs. Blaine, talked informally about their mother. Mrs. McCormick's niece, Kate Fowler Merle-Smith (Mrs. Van Santvoord), made available the results of extensive research in the history of the Fowler family. She and Wilton

Lloyd-Smith, husband of Mrs. McCormick's great-niece (Marjorie Fleming Lloyd-Smith), each secured from Mrs. McCormick's own lips, late in life, her recollections of her early days and her relatives. The files of the McCormick Historical Association (now the McCormick Collection of the State Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin) yielded rich material, particularly on Mrs. McCormick's relation to the reaper business.

Thanks are due to those who kindly shared their memories and their letters; to several who read chapters in the course of preparation bearing on fields in which they worked: Dr. John R. Mott, Dr. Robert E. Speer, Mrs. A. C. Zenos, Dr. George L. Robinson, Dr. Landon Carter Haynes, and Mr. Forest D. Siefkin, vice president and general counsel of the International Harvester Company, who also kindly made the Company's law library available. The author is deeply indebted to the late Dr. Herbert A. Kellar, coordinator of the McCormick Collection, and Mrs. Kellar for guidance in using the McCormick Collection and for critical and constructive reading of the manuscript; to Mr. Fowler McCormick, Mrs. Merle-Smith, and Mrs. Lloyd-Smith for reading and helpful comment, and to others who helped in special ways.

To her associates in research and related work, the author owes far more than can be briefly conveyed: to Miss Portia Cheal, whose persistent research and wide range of information averted many inaccuracies and whose fine critical judgment has been a constant contribution; to Miss Elizabeth Bostater, nurse-companion, whose close acquaintance with Mrs. McCormick in later years heightened the value of her able help in research and criticism.

Naturally, none of those to whom thanks are offered bears any responsibility for the faults of the following pages. These exist in spite of, not because of, those who have helped.

S.V.R.

INTRODUCTION

ON RUSH STREET, in Chicago, a short block from the roar of North Michigan Avenue, stood until recently a large brownstone mansion. Massive, with high mansard roof and mansard cupola, set in grounds stretching to three streets, the house was for the later years of its existence a serene and dignified survival of a past age.

But it had rich meaning for most of its long years in terms of life. In architecture, decoration, furnishings, this house was an expression of the place in the economic and social order, the taste and personal qualities of Cyrus Hall McCormick, inventor of the reaper, and of his wife Nettie Fowler McCormick, who built it in the late seventies. For somewhat less than five years 135 (later 675) Rush Street was the busy scene of linked interests of husband and wife in business, philanthropy, religion. For nearly forty more it was the center of activities of its widowed mistress—the center of a series of widening circles.

In the inner circle it was a home for the McCormick family of five children—two out of seven having lived their brief lives before this house was built; a happy playground for the swarming young McCormick kin and their mates for whom the mysteries of its second floor, connected all the way round through closets and bathrooms, had magic charm. It was a resort for counsel and help of a large clan of their elders, coming in search of ready sympathy, good talk, material aid. Its reception and living rooms, rich in satinwood, ebony, rosewood, its wide hall and beautiful stairway, were a fine setting for gatherings of Chicago's social elect or an impressive background for religious and philanthropic meetings. Its more retired rooms were the scene of business conferences over which this woman presided, directing a great business unofficially. Through its doors, as the years passed, streamed college presidents and professors, theological students, ministers, representatives of

every Chicago good cause, of scores of national causes, and—for the outermost circle of all had a world radius—of great international missionary movements.

It was with reason that Mrs. McCormick's children called their mother's home a half-way house between the Orient and the Occident.

In the different relations centering here Nettie (named Nancy) Fowler McCormick is revealed. Her house, though she ranged from it far and often, gave unity to her manifold interests; it gave the tone of her life. For she was not a public character in the sense of those who choose a career or are the devoted leaders of causes—such as Frances E. Willard, Anna Howard Shaw, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Alice Freeman Palmer and others whose lives crossed the dates of her own. Yet, leading the private life of a wife and mother, without official position, she was a pioneer business woman. She had a definite, active part in the development of a major American business springing from a great American invention; the story of that development is incomplete without her. She was not only the wife but the business adviser, almost the partner, of her husband in the expanding growth of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. She was not only the mother but the directing power of the young president of the company, Cyrus H. McCormick, after his father's death in 1884. In that son's word she was at first the virtual president. And for years she was the counselor of her three sons in the business that eventually became a chief component of the International Harvester Company. In this aspect of her life there are involved, in George Herbert Palmer's term, "the rights of history."

Besides—and this was still more distinctively *her* life—she was a vital factor in the development of important movements in her long day. Instead of the life of ease and social pleasure which her circumstances would have permitted, she chose the unselfish way of stewardship and service, and made of that choice a life task. The history of education in certain definite fields would have been different without her. Certain religious world movements deeply felt her influence as a giver of money, ideas, counsel, spiritual guardianship. She helped to mold her generation or, rather, the generation to follow hers—for the greater part of her full-time work as a Christian philanthropist centered on the world's youth.

And there was, in addition, something remarkable in this woman's personality, to be preserved: a rare balance of brilliant mind and ardent heart, tempered to human interest by bewildering but fascinating contradictions; and above all, an extraordinary power to touch the lives of others.

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PART I

ST. LAWRENCE RIVER GIRL

Chapter 1

ANCESTORS AND INFLUENCES

NETTIE FOWLER McCORMICK was born on February 8, 1835 in St. Lawrence River country.

When her pioneering kinfolk went there, that part of Jefferson County, New York, was deep forest with few settlements. Men made clearings for their homes, burned the stumps, sold the ashes. They cut the forests throughout the Great Lakes country, shipped timber and ashes by lake and river to Montreal, Quebec, England. Shipping developed, not only on the lake and the great river but on the tributary streams: the Black River, the Chaumont, even little Perch River.

Each of the villages that formed the background of her youth lay on the St. Lawrence or one of the lesser rivers that feed it. Brownville, her birthplace, once held rosy hopes of commercial prominence through its location on the Black River. Depauville, the tiny village of her little girlhood, sent its logs to the St. Lawrence by way of the Chaumont, then a stream with an impressive cataract. Clayton, where she grew to young womanhood, thrust itself into the St. Lawrence among the Thousand Islands, and long before they became a popular summer resort it was the site of extensive lumbering and shipping and shipbuilding operations—operations in which relatives of hers were a directing force. Throughout her life the “noble” St. Lawrence, as she often called it, was a precious memory. Repeatedly she referred to it—a broad silver ribbon of beauty in the background of her mind, part of all that was loveliest and most interesting in her youth.

The earliest appearance of Nancy Maria Fowler by name in her family’s papers is in a letter written by her mother, Clarissa Fowler,

to her own mother, Nancy Spicer Davis, on July 13, 1835. "Little Nancy M.," she wrote, "grows very finely, is a very good child. You would be pleased to see her, I think."

Little Nancy, the good child (who was to be called Nettie most of her life), was then a trifle over five months old. The family was in Depauville now, ten miles to the north of Nancy's birthplace. Back in a Brownville burying ground Clarissa and Melzar Fowler had left their first-born, Anson, his brief life ended nineteen days after it began. But along with the infant Nancy they had brought to Depauville her two-year-old brother Eldridge. Here the children were fondly welcomed by their Fowler grandparents, Anson and Maria.

Pioneering westward these two had settled about 1820 in Catfish Falls (the early name of Depauville), then hardly more than a clearing in the forest where several hills tumble together. Shortly after they came Anson, hacking away a bit of the wilderness to build a house with the fallen logs, had suffered an injury to his head. Thereafter his power to work lessened and responsibility rested heavily on the shoulders of his eldest son, Melzar, not yet twenty. By 1823 (Melzar wrote to an Eastern relative) they had built a house and store room under one roof, a "framed potash" (that is, an ashery) and a barn and had commenced building a stone store. This property lay on the northern edge of the village that was to be, under a steep hill that held an Indian burying ground.

The combined business there carried on was described by Melzar's daughter, Nettie Fowler McCormick, many years later:

"They carried dry goods, and they would cut the dress goods in lengths for the farmers' wives, and the muslin was cut in lengths for sheets.

"They had experienced men, and in winter they carried goods to the country in sleighs, and took in exchange all the wood ashes that the family would sell. There was a fixed price per bushel for the wood ashes. . . . When a sleigh full of ashes came, they were put in vats, on which warm water was poured, and there in casks was distilled a wonderful lye, and that lye was collected and stood until it hardened, and was then turned out, and the product was a pearl, and every pearl had its price. These would be called pots and pearls. As mercantile articles they were listed in the news-

papers. That was my father's business. He bought dry goods in New York, and sold them to the people of that country. He was a merchant also in hay, cheese, butter, etc."

She might have mentioned, too, the timbering and rafting enterprises that her father added to his occupations—enterprises that took him from Lake St. Clair on the west down the St. Lawrence to Quebec on the east.

Probably it was Anson Fowler who stayed most in the store, selling (to pick at random from an invoice of 1826) dictionaries, grammars, and spellers; green, yellow, red elan, sarsenet and ratinet by the yard; red cambric, velvet, watch seals, pink silk, suspenders, combs, spectacles, spoons, ink powder, snuff, indigo and copperas for dyes.

In the late eighteen twenties Melzar Fowler, perhaps under impulsion of both romance and ambition, resolved on expansion. Keeping in close touch with the "home situation" at Depauville, he set up a second store and later an ashery at Brownville, bringing his young brother John into the work there. He had high hopes of Brownville, though he was shrewd enough to write: "Notwithstanding my favorable views I calculate to get hold of no property except such as will readily sell without loss."

This settlement, older than Depauville, was named in honor of its founder Jacob Brown, who had given up teaching in the East to pioneer as land agent for a French company in the Black River wilderness and had chosen this spot for a settlement. During the War of 1812 Jacob Brown, now General Brown, chief in command of the American forces in that area, had his headquarters in Brownville in his own colonial stone mansion which, with its fine setting in a deep lawn, is still Brownville's chief glory.

Riding the ten miles from Depauville, Melzar Fowler must have passed General Brown's mansion on his way down the long slope of Main Street to the old stone tavern or the river, or to his own stone store. He would have glimpsed in the near-by streets four or five other stone houses and a stone church that still give the village a superior air. Not far along the river road stood in his time a row of stone houses, barracks-like; one of these, once rented by Silas Fish Spicer, may have been the house in which Clarissa Spicer paid at least one of her long visits from Oneida County to her brother

Silas. At any rate, somewhere Melzar met the lovely visitor, courted and won her. And when he was ready to set up a business in Brownville he was also ready to establish a home.

Clarissa Spicer's family on both sides had a Connecticut background. Her father was Silas Draper Spicer, her mother was Nancy Fish.

Of the Fish family little is known. John Fish, an ancestor of Nancy Fish, was in 1679 unanimously voted schoolmaster for Stonington, Connecticut, far to the east on Long Island Sound, to instruct children—"such as shall be inclined." Several of Nancy Fish Spicer's generation appear to have settled in central New York. Among them was a brother whose daughter, Laura Fish, went with her husband, Dr. Gerrit Judd, as an early missionary to Hawaii—the Sandwich Islands in their day. Dr. Judd not only ministered to the people's health but became practically the power behind the throne there. He was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and at a critical time saved the Hawaiian monarchy from foreign domination. His wife, a woman of rare character and abilities, also contributed much to Hawaii's welfare. Two grandsons of theirs, George Robert Carter and Lawrence McCully Judd, were governors of Hawaii. Nancy Fish Spicer herself in her later years (Mrs. Elijah Davis then) is glimpsed in a little packet of old letters—a woman tenderly interested in the varying fortunes of her large family, deeply religious, accepting the difficulties of her lot with fortitude.

Her first husband, Silas Draper Spicer, was born in North Groton, Connecticut where Peter Spicer, probable founder of the family in America, held his first grant of land. Tradition says that he came from Virginia and that his parentage was English. Indeed, family tradition, fortified by reasonable assumption, leaps a gap in the Spicer genealogy and finds its ancestors in the Spicers who are of record in England, with numerous mayors and other dignitaries in the various lines. And in the American generations many individuals apparently deserved the couplet:

If aught that's good or great could save
Spicer had never seen the grave.

It was the first Silas Spicer, Nettie Fowler's great grandfather, who started the family westward. A farmer and wheelwright, in

1796 he moved from Connecticut to a region in the hilly center of New York State and became a prosperous landowner. His eldest son, Silas Draper Spicer, emigrated with his father, bringing from Connecticut his wife and two little sons.

This Silas, Nettie's grandfather, died in 1813 at Unadilla Forks. The epitaph on his gravestone in the beautiful cemetery there tells the startling story for later generations to read that he "shot himself instantly dead, October 20, 1813." How and why remain untold in any known record or tradition. His widow's words in her quaint diary, carefully preserved by her descendants, that "the 20 of October, eleven years ago, was a day of great trials and deep sorrows," is the one comment, poignant but unrevealing. For many years his granddaughter, Nettie Fowler McCormick, had a summer home a few miles away from Unadilla Forks; but no letter, no family memory records her knowledge of the sad legend on this ancient stone. Perhaps she knew and chose not to speak.

Before Silas Draper Spicer's death, his eldest son, Silas Fish Spicer, had moved north into Jefferson County where he plied his joined pioneer trades of tanner and shoemaker. And when she was about nineteen his sister Clarissa followed him northward. She was born December 2, 1805 in the "town" of Brookfield in what is now Madison County, New York, the eighth child of her parents, whose total was eleven. Nothing is known of her early life—possibly because her family records, held by her daughter, were lost in the Chicago Fire. She was not yet eight years old when her father died and there is nothing in surviving letters to suggest family prosperity. But there is clear indication that this was a family closely knit in affection and interest.

Clarissa went north before her mother's marriage to Elijah Davis, of Sauquoit near Utica, but apparently counted her mother's home hers. In an interval between her northern sojourns she lived for some time in Utica. Here, though her mother and stepfather were Methodists, Clarissa joined the First Presbyterian Church and a remarkable Bible class associated with its Sunday school. Both Sunday school and Bible class had unusual influence and vitality and far more than local fame.

In Brownville in 1825 and indirectly in Utica Clarissa may have been influenced by the outstanding revivalist of that day, Charles Grandison Finney, who conducted soul-searching meetings in

these and other places in the state of New York. However that may be, the Utica connections clearly deepened her religious experience. Of the Bible class she says, "Great reason have I to Praise the Lord that such an institution was ever formed." Her New Year resolutions, "framed at the request of Mr. King, superintendent of the Bible classes in Utica, on commencing the New Year 1827," reveal her deep piety and—in number 7—a realism that not all framers of resolutions exhibit. Her daughter preserved them:

"1 I will by the assistance of God try to seek him with all my heart

"2 I will to keep constantly in mind that my chief business of life is to prepare my soul for eternity

"3 I will not speak evil of any one

"4 I will do to others as I would have others do unto me & keep in mind the sin of liars

"5 I will strive at all times to bring doing good to my fellow mortals looking unto the Lord

"6 I will every day once or more go in secret to ask the blessing of God

"7 I will at least once in each week look over these resolutions & strive to profit by them & may the Lord help me to keep them"

Though presently she was to join Melzar Fowler in the Methodist Church, Clarissa had a Presbyterian connection in Brownville—a share in a Bible class that commanded her zealous interest.

A little sheaf of letters exchanged between Melzar Fowler and Clarissa Spicer and treasured by their daughter, tells the story of a mutual affection.

Clarissa was responsible for opening the correspondence. The two young people were only a few miles apart—Melzar in Depauville, Clarissa in Brownville—but those miles were hard to travel then and their meetings were not as frequent as either wished. So Clarissa proposed letters—"not out of any coquettish motive," she comments, "neither because I felt competent to do justice in answering your letters"—and Melzar, though plainly not quite sure of the point, complied. "At the moment you spoke of my commencing written correspondence," he wrote, "I queried what was the desired object but although you only answered that

you would be glad to have me write I on a moment's reflection decided that you through your affection wished to learn my welfare &c— This perfectly agrees with my feelings and though the intervals between my visits may seem less to me because they are at my calculation yet many a time should I have esteemed it a great privilege to have read your communication."

"Affection" is the strongest word used in these "love letters," but love letters they are. Melzar writes: Clarissa is "the person who I anticipate will assist in happifying my life and whose life it will be my greatest desire and highest pleasure to happify." Clarissa, in turn: "I feel as for me it is not in my power to add any thing to the happiness of any one but should I be placed where I should enjoy your society more intimately it shall be the study of my life to make you happy in so doing I shall add to my own."

Melzar had to make to Clarissa the immemorial explanation of man to woman—business prevents, and he was clever about it. "I conclude," he wrote, "that it is your pleasure that I attend to my Busyness unless it appears that my presents with you will be profitable. With those views I shall endeavor to suppress my inclinations for enjoying your society."

The religious strain is strong through the letters of both, Melzar's reflections running rather to exposition, Clarissa's to personal devoutness with a marked humility and even a melancholy tinge. "Our Village bells have again told the departure of another year," she wrote on New Year's Day, 1829; "on seeing the busy multitudes around me I am led to reflect with what different feelings our fellow mortals welcome the anniversary—some with smiling faces & hearts light with joyous anticipation eyes sparkling with impatience rush forward to join the giddy dance—again I see those whose countenances are sad with grief & whose hearts are sunk in bitterness of thought & why! because Death is in our land that cruel spoiler of human happiness what an immense number of human beings have been summoned to Eternity during the past year. . . . I hope I have an interest in your prayers that I may be prepared if I am called to go hence before the close of the new born year."

On April 12, 1829 at the home of Silas Fish Spicer Clarissa and Melzar were married—a dark-eyed bridegroom and a beautiful blue-eyed bride, tall, slender, graceful.

About all that is known of their early housekeeping arrangements in Brownville is revealed in deeds, a lease, insurance papers. Probably it began in some of the living rooms over the stone store facing Main Street. Touching letters written by Melzar Fowler tell simply of the birth and death of their first-born son Anson. The young mother wrote, "Since the death of my little Anson every worldly thing looks hardly worth possessing."

By the spring of 1832 the Fowlers appear to have lived in a rented house, and it was probably here that Eldridge and Nancy Fowler were born. Unfortunately Melzar's lease gives no location; but there are indications that the house was on Basin Street, which runs parallel to the Black River.

Despite his youth—he was not yet twenty-seven when he went to Brownville—Melzar Fowler was an outstanding citizen of the little village. He was a member of the building committee responsible for putting up in 1832 the Methodist Church, which still stands at the top of Main Street. Old subscription lists show his \$50 contribution heading the roll and prove his activity as a collector. A stray village election ticket reveals him as candidate for "Inspector of Weights and Measures." One who knew him wrote of him as "a man of few words, quiet in his manners, just & Honorable in all his dealings with men . . . one of the leading men of B. Ville. . . ."

But early in 1835 Melzar, finding that Brownville had not afforded "the advantages anticipated," sold that store, keeping the ashery, and returned to Depauville. Business prospects there were brightening. Melzar admitted, however, that he would have been happy to sell both places and emigrate to the head of Lake Ontario.

The household in Depauville was a busy one. Clarissa Fowler wrote, "We have a large family of men to do for." The men in the immediate family were Anson and Melzar, for the second son, John, had gone to the village of French Creek as Clayton was often called. To these perhaps were added a clerk or two and possibly the men who scouted for ashes. And there was the ten-year-old youngest son of the family, Richard, as well as the two little children for the two women to tend. Jane Fowler, the only living daughter, had married Eldridge G. Merick of Clayton, who was to be a leading influence in Nancy Fowler's life.

Even in 1835 no doubt much of the description of Maria Fowler's early pioneering days that a granddaughter of hers wrote long afterward still applied to these Fowler women:

"She made her own starch from potatoes, her soda from the ashes as well as her soap. The woolen dresses for winter wear, as well as the coats and pants were all of her spinning, coloring and weaving. And then for summer she hatched and spun the flax, and colored the yarn, and wove checked linens for herself and children. . . . Candles, too, she must make or spend the long winter evenings with only the light from the great burning logs in the fireplace."

Both Melzar and Clarissa were important additions to the godly element in Depauville. Clarissa taught a class of little girls in the Methodist Sunday school. Melzar, in his daughter's words, was "a leader in the cause of Sunday schools and of the church." Traditions have survived that illustrate the Fowler men's characteristics. One dates from the time when they were building the first barn on the place. The neighbors, as was the friendly practice of those days, were helping. But the Fowlers violated a custom—though they served plenty of food, there was no liquor. So in pique or in mischief, the volunteer assistants put in certain pieces upside down. Reflection on the fine qualities of the Fowlers and repentance overtook them at night, and before the next dawn they had confessed and planned correction.

These Fowlers had for their first American ancestor "William Fowler, the Magistrate," who emigrated from England in 1637 and became one of the early settlers of Milford in the colony of New Haven. His son John moved farther east along Long Island Sound to Guilford, and Guilford remained the family residence through the six generations between "the Magistrate" and Nancy Fowler. It was her grandfather Anson who, leaving Connecticut for New York State, pushed on to its far borders.

His wife's line, according to Esselstyn family tradition, goes back to ancestors of noble rank in Holland. However that may be, the first Esselstyn in America, Marten Cornelise Yesselsteyn, had no title. He came from Holland about 1660 and became one of the first settlers of Schenectady. Thence the family moved south to the vicinity of Kingston, thence to Claverack in what became Col-

umbia County where the Esselstyns leased Van Rensselaer land. Here the family established itself, acquiring broad acres, large numbers, and substantial standing.

Eldest of the fourth generation of Esselstyns in this country was Major Richard Esselstyn, one of the early supporters of the Continental Congress and a soldier of the Revolution. At Claverack he owned a large farm worked by slaves who received their freedom under a manumission act passed by New York State after his death, or perhaps were freed earlier by his word. He married twice and had eleven children. The youngest child, Maria, a daughter of Maria Van Alstyne Esselstyn, was left an orphan in infancy and nursed by a slave who, though she claimed to be an African princess, refused freedom. In 1859 a cousin of Nancy Fowler, visiting at Claverack, found the ancestral home "hardly more than a wreck of what it had been"; but a substantial house today continues the Esselstyn tradition and doubtless holds some of the original structure.

As a child little Maria Esselstyn lived with a half sister, Magdalena, wife of John Nash, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts—a sister so much older that the little Maria called her "Aunt Nash." Let her granddaughter, Maria Merick Lyon, describe Maria Esselstyn's early training. She "attended an Episcopal School where I fancy little was taught beyond the 'three R's' but great pains was taken with the manners and proper ways of sitting and walking. Among other things they often had to wear a collar stuck full of pins to make them stand straight and hold up their heads. Grandma was very straight until a few years before she died. The principal accomplishments were fine darning, mending, lace work, embroidery, painting on satin and velvet. Grandma excelled in every kind of needle-work. . . . It was probably her sister who taught her to spin wool and flax and also to weave." And it was this same grandmother who taught Nettie Fowler to spin and to sew.

Where Maria Esselstyn and Anson Fowler met, courted, married no record discloses. They were married in 1802 when Maria was eighteen and Anson thirty-three. Their early housekeeping was in the town of Edinburgh, Saratoga County, New York, where Anson kept a store and where in 1803 their first child,

Melzar, was born. A letter of 1800 that shows the young Maria with her brother at a place close to Edinburgh suggests that it was then and there that she met Anson.

Their next home was the town of Galway not far from Saratoga Springs—already by 1805 an elegant watering place—and on one of the main arteries of early nineteenth century travel. Here, according to the granddaughter's account, Maria Fowler "was for some time mistress of a country tavern on the main road from New England through New York, and entertained great numbers of people who were migrating to Western New York, then the far west. President Monroe and his wife (in the course of a tour of the Eastern and Northern States) traveled in their own carriage from Washington to Saratoga, spent a night at her house, and I can imagine were most hospitably entertained, and enjoyed much the cooking which they greatly praised, and no doubt very justly, for grandma was a most excellent cook and I can imagine did her best for her exalted guests."

Two of Maria's brothers were responsible for the Fowlers' own move to "the far west"—Jefferson County. Shortly after 1800 these two, Richard Morris Esselstyn and John Brodhead Esselstyn, penetrated to the margin of the St. Lawrence River near where it flows from its source in Lake Ontario—a region of scenic beauty and of strategic importance in war and commerce. At the site of the present village of Cape Vincent the Esselstyn brothers joined the few settlers who had begun to clear the wilderness, to build ferries, a fort, an inn; and they settled themselves as lumbermen and storekeepers.

Neither of the brothers had come direct to this spot, and Richard had acted in exploring another part of the county under direction of James Donatius LeRay, whose part in settling Jefferson County deserves mention. LeRay, whose father had in France befriended Benjamin Franklin and John Adams and the infant American republic, had become a landowner on a large scale at various points in the north country; he sold land to French exiles seeking security and opportunity at the time of the French Revolution and later to Bonapartists driven out when Napoleon fell. Chief of these was Joseph Bonaparte himself, who built a summer home on the edge of Jefferson County at Natural Bridge and maintained a col-

orful splendor in these wilds with his fine plate and glass and elegant coaches.

Cape Vincent, named for James LeRay's son, held much of glamour through the French residents there whose homes Nettie Fowler must often have seen. The most romantic was the so-called "Cup and Saucer House"—from the shape of the house and cupola—which tradition held was built for Napoleon to occupy when his loyal followers should have rescued him from exile on Elba.

The Esselstyn brothers at Cape Vincent were highly self-respecting citizens, proud of their heritage, loyal to the clan. It was natural that they should urge their sister Maria and her husband to join them in this opening country. When they came, the families—at Depauville and on "the Cape"—maintained as much intimacy as the miles between permitted. And as the Esselstyns replenished the earth mightily, by the time Melzar Fowler returned to Depauville Cape Vincent afforded plenty of cousinly relatives for his young family.

Nearly a year after the date of Clarissa Fowler's letter quoted earlier, she again wrote to her mother about "Nancy M."—a thumbnail picture of that babyhood. "Little Nancy M.," wrote Clarissa, "is a great run away and talks a great many things. Eldridge M. is growing finely talks plain and has learned his letters."

In the interval between the first and second letters Clarissa had lost her husband and her children their father. "They are indeed a great comfort to me," she continues, "but I am often called to painful reflections when I look on them as fatherless children but I have . . . so many blessings still left me that I think it my indispensable duty to submit with cheerfulness and strive to render myself useful and those around me happy. . . . I sometimes even now feel to say it is God Let him do as seemeth good in his sight."

Melzar Fowler died as the result of a tragic accident in August of 1855, when his son was two years old and his daughter seven months; when he himself was only thirty-two and his wife three years younger. He was fatally injured by the kick of his own bad-tempered horse which, as he approached it in a strange stall, failed to recognize its master.

Melzar was about to build a new house and was employing a Watertown builder to help. On an August day he was to make an early start on his fourteen-mile drive to Watertown to consult this man. The day before had been a fast day and he had eaten nothing. Unwilling to let him go without breakfast his mother rose and prepared food for him. She watched him ride off down the slope, across the bridge over the Chaumont, on up the steep hill beyond. There on its summit he paused and presently she saw him turn his horse and drive briskly back. "I could not go," he said, "without prayers."

So the family had its usual Bible reading and prayer and Melzar set forth again. He stopped at Failing's Hotel across the river from Watertown long enough to put up his horse, transacted his business in the village and returned to the hotel.

Let his daughter finish the story:

"The hostler came to father and said, 'I am feeding your horse, Mr. Fowler, and I don't like his actions.' Father went out, and said, 'I think I can manage him.' As soon as my father went up to his head, he brought his hind foot forward, and kicked my father, injuring his stomach.

"Mother got the word immediately about my father being injured, and she took me—a baby seven months old—grandmother going along, and went to Watertown. Everyone said that when I saw the tears on every face, I acted as if I knew something sad had happened.

"My father's last words—he died within three days—were 'Into thy hands, oh, Lord, I commend my spirit.'"

"Dear father," wrote Melzar Fowler's daughter many years later, "he died young—very young, but so well had he done his life's work that Melzar Fowler was known in the whole county as a man of good judgment, of influence and he had the name of always standing by the right." And at another time: "My father was a leader in the cause of Sunday schools, and in the church, and he had a chamber in his home for the minister, and for the circuit rider. My father did not speak often in public—was not eloquent. He was practical and stood for all good things in organized society—in the Sunday school and the church; he supported the Bible Society."

This reputation given him by his daughter who never knew him is sustained by church records and by tributes gleaned from the letters of relatives and friends which that daughter treasured. There is something reassuring about the persistence of such a reputation as Melzar Fowler's. Not a prominent man, more than a hundred years dead, still "his works do follow him."

Chapter 2

THE ORPHAN

THE next seven years of Nancy Fowler's life were spent with her mother and brother at Depauville—a normally happy childhood, except for the shadow on Clarissa of her husband's death and after a while the deepening shadow of her own frailness. Courageously she carried on Melzar's work. Left with a small estate, she fulfilled her obligations as an administrator and as guardian of her children. She carried out her husband's plans for the house as he had made them. "It had a large living room and a parlor," wrote her daughter, "a spacious house for those times." It still stands—a pleasant little white house on the north edge of Depauville at the foot of a steep hill.

Clarissa became a business woman in a day when this marked her as a person of unusual resource and initiative. With the advice and unflagging aid of her husband's brother-in-law, Eldridge G. Merick of Clayton, she continued the store-and-ashery business and by 1837 she took in a partner, one Helon Norton.

In the late thirties the little Fowlers lost the daily companionship of their Fowler grandparents. As Anson Fowler's health declined it was thought best for them to live by themselves. They took a cottage in Clayton where their son John Fowler and their daughter, Jane Merick, were already established with their growing families. But little Nancy saw her four grandparents (allowing for one being a "step" grandfather) together in the little house at Depauville. Three times Nancy Spicer Davis and her second husband made a three-day trip by cutter at the time of deep snow from their home in Sauquoit to Jefferson County—to visit Silas Fish Spicer with his many "little noisy jabbering children" and Clarissa, with her small son and daughter. "Little E.M. and N.M.," Clarissa

wrote when "N.M." was two, "speak often of Grandpa and Grandma Davis with a great deal of joy."

Nancy Davis, however, died in April, 1839 when her namesake was only four, too young to form a lasting memory. The heritage she left is expressed in the record of her death on the books of the Methodist Church to which she belonged: "Uniform in Piety, Ardent in Zeal. Had unshaken confidence in promises of God." And her son Silas wrote to his sister Clarissa, "Few have been blessed with such a mother as ours was."

Of Nancy's early childhood—the years in Depauville—only a few memories were recorded. In reminiscent mood late in her life, she recalled her mother's holding and rocking her when she had a headache; a time when her mother took her from the church to the schoolhouse (very near in those days) and punished her—she didn't say how—for some misbehavior in meeting ("I revere her memory for it, because I know that she tried to do right by her naughty child"); and the occasion on which Clarissa, returning from a little absence, brought to each of her children "a beautiful brown glazed earthenware cup" and on the instant the little girl ran to the well to fill hers, stumbled, fell, broke it. Curiously, this had been embedded in the child's Puritan conscience as a naughtiness rather than an infant grief.

The earliest way to school was stamped on her memory—"George Austin [the hired man] on horseback, and mother putting Eldridge up behind him. Eldridge was to hold on to George Austin, and I was to ride in front next to the horse's mane, and in this way went to school every morning." The road took them through a bare half mile of that hilly country—down one slope, across the busy river and up the steep pull to the schoolhouse.

It was her older cousin Maria Merick who recalled the activities of the little house in Depauville—the brick oven where pies, cakes and puddings were baked, the big fireplace with its strong iron crane on which the kettles were suspended. "There were never such well-cooked meats," she wrote, "as those hung up before the big wood fire." And she had a clear memory not only of her grandmother but of Nancy's mother. "Grandmother and Aunt Clarissa were wonderful women, true and noble, bright and happy, making their home a most attractive visiting place for children and

young people. Some of the happiest days of my child life were spent in their simple humble home."

On the child Nancy's mind were impressed the last festivities her mother planned. For her seventh birthday Clarissa invited the cousins from Clayton and other playmates, "and we had nice things to eat." In August of that same year, when Eldridge's birthday came Clarissa Fowler was ill, but "she had some village boys at the house— They went into the field next to our house, and got ears of corn which we roasted. It was a party with nice things to eat. . . . Mother . . . liked us to have rational pleasures."

Nancy kept a clear picture of how her mother looked in the last summer of her life. "Mother was wearing lavender in summer time, and made a lavender shirred bonnet, held in shape by rattans, which I remember very well, and which she made for herself."

But the deepest impression on the little girl's mind, naturally, was that of the final scene in these seven years—her mother's death. It is a repeated reference in her school compositions and in one, "A visit to my father's and mother's grave," she told the story in detail. She wrote about it to her brother in a spirit of shared observance on the sad anniversary. In her journals (the earliest beginning just before she was fifteen) for several years each November fourth was marked as a drear but sacred time of sharpened remembrance, the gloom of the season deepening her depression. And more than once through the long years of her life she described the scene.

Clarissa Fowler was long in failing health, probably with consumption. ("I remember Dr. Bates burning a piece of paper in a glass cup, placing it on my mother's back hoping the irritation would help her.") As she grew worse Eldridge was sent to his grandmother's home in Clayton and Nancy to her uncle Silas Spicer's household a few miles away in the tiny hamlet of Perch River.

Clarissa sank rapidly and one evening Helon Norton went in haste for Nancy, though for some reason—perhaps the greater distance—her brother was not recalled. She was brought home, taken upstairs to bed, but carried down in the night to the living room where Clarissa's bed had been put, to receive her mother's last tender message. "I was carried a weeping child to her bedside," she wrote in her diary after twelve years had passed, "& when racked with pain, the thought of which fills me with anguish, and seem-

ingly unconscious of the presence of any one else she, seeing my grief & hearing my sobs—turned to me and said, Don't cry my daughter, meet me in heaven. Oh what words! They shall live in my memory forever—a beacon light to heaven." Clarissa was to linger a few hours longer, but in the early morning she was gone—"her pure spirit was freed from its mortal coil and borne by angels who, unperceived, had mixed with the throng waiting to carry it home."

The year of Clarissa Fowler's death was 1842. About eighty years later the woman who had been her little daughter brought from her memory a touching picture of the funeral, still fresh and vivid under all the heaped-up years—a picture in spoken words so like the record in the young girl's diary that the two accounts blend.

"It was a bleak November day, and light snow was on the ground, when mother's funeral took place, and as the church was not far off—across the bridge—it was arranged that Brother and I should walk behind the coffin—two little figures sadly following the earthly remains of all that was dear to them.

"I remember the funeral, and I recall that they sang, 'Sister, thou wast mild and lovely, gentle as the morning breeze.' They also sang, 'Why should we start, and fear to die, or shake at death's alarm? 'tis but the voice that Jesus sends, to call us to His arms.' It was sung to the tune of China.

"The funeral was very large—for *every body* loved her who had gone from earth forever. . . . They placed the coffin after the sermon was over out doors so that all might look for the last time on features in life so radiant with kindness to all—many felt they had lost their adviser, their friend, & one to whom they were wont to tell all their tales of sorrow or woe. They bore her to the grave yard which was about two miles from the village slowly & sadly."

The short journey from her mother's grave at Corbin's Corners near Depauville to her grandmother's home at Clayton, seven miles away, opened the second chapter in Nancy Fowler's life. Now she was an orphan, her father lost to her before she knew him, her beloved mother gone. "Dear old Grandpa put his hands on our heads [she recalled that "cold, dreary night" years later], & with quivering lips gave us a welcome—and Grandma who

brought us home, tried to make us cheerful, tried to have us eat something which she had fixed nice for our supper, but oh, when the time came to go to bed, not to bid mother good night—to sleep so far from her, to feel that never again would she have us kneel down, one at each side of her, as she sat in her chair & with our hands in hers teach us to say ‘Our Father,’ never again with a voice sweeter to us than any other music say ‘Good night’—*oh it was the first taste of the bitter cup which every orphan drinks!*”

But it was not to a childhood of greatly changed circumstances that her mother’s death brought her. From a simple comfortable home in one village she went to a simple comfortable home in another; from one atmosphere of love to another already familiar to her. And for this she was grateful, repeatedly checking her grief for her orphanhood with appreciation of so much affection and kindness. “God in a particular manner ‘tempered the wind to the shorn lambs,’ ” she wrote as a young girl, “when he opened the hearts of dear friends to take in two children. We have never known want—and unkindness has *ever been a stranger.*”

The home that Grandmother Fowler opened to Nancy and Eldridge was a pleasant little two-story cottage around the corner from the larger homes of their uncle John Fowler and their uncle-in-law Eldridge G. Merick—all so close to the broad St. Lawrence that its waters and the masts of ships met the children’s eyes every time they went from one relative’s house to another’s. The two children had an intimate place in all three households and for the first time enjoyed the daily companionship of cousins not far from their own ages—Maria, Ermina, and Melzar Merick, Caroline, Delia, and Milo Fowler. Nancy was almost an adopted daughter in Eldridge Merick’s home and he made himself responsible for her support, giving her besides warm love and wise guidance. But it was Maria Fowler who took the place of her mother.

By all accounts Maria Fowler was a woman of rare nobility of character, strong, pious, wise, self-sacrificing, courageous, and warm-hearted, capable of giving the children tender loving care without a grandmother’s spoiling. Everybody in the related families honored and loved her. And Nancy’s journals abound in tender references to her dear grandmother who “has ever thrown round me a mother’s protection, and bound my bleeding heart with a mother’s affection.” There may have been a special bond

between her and her grandmother in that Maria Fowler too had grown up in orphanhood.

Another new factor in Nancy's molding was the St. Lawrence River itself. As a little girl she must often have seen it; now she lived on its shores. We had better glance at Clayton and the river before we look more closely into her grandmother's house and Nancy's life there.

Built on a promontory thrust into the St. Lawrence, Clayton barely escaped being an island. Only a stretch of seven or eight hundred feet of land at the top of the town between two bays make it a peninsula. "Made land" has since widened the town on both sides, but without changing the plan of streets that was laid out before Nancy Fowler's time. The main street ran along the river front as it does today. Nearly at one end was the steamboat landing for lake-and-river boats. Next to it was the office of Merick, Fowler, and Esselstyn, where Nancy's two uncles and a cousin carried on their business. At the other end was their shipyard where were built with one or two exceptions all the steamboats forming the line of boats on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River on the American side. Now the city hall stands on the site of the shipyard, but in earlier days the bows of ships in building extended over the street near the Mericks' house.

It was a colorful waterfront then with rafting in French Creek Bay and shipbuilding not far away and the beauty of river traffic, sailing vessels as well as sidewheelers, always in sight in the summer.

All of this color and activity appealed keenly to Nancy Fowler. The river was the constant foreground of her growing years. She rowed on it, fished in it; she traveled on the family boats in and out of the lovely islands, up and down those winding shores; she watched the work of shipbuilding and of making timber into rafts; she listened to old tales about the St. Lawrence, reveled in its beauty of water and shore line and sunrise and sunset. In the spring she looked for the first break in the ice that foretold returning life to the river and release of the winter-bound village. "As I was passing down the street toward the Post Office," she wrote one April first, "I thought I saw an open place in the limpid waters of the St. Lawrence. In my inmost soul I cried 'Joy! Joy!'"

In that little house a few blocks from the "noble river," the din-

ing room appeared to be the gathering place. There are glimpses of the invalid grandfather reading before morning prayers, of grandmother sewing at her stand pulled into the middle of the room, of a little dark-eyed girl with a composition started on her slate, sitting on a lounge beside the teacher-boarder who might give her a helpful word. Brother Eldridge appears more dimly, for he was not to stay there as long as his sister. Richard Fowler, the children's youngest uncle, seventeen when they came to the little house, was in the group for the first five years except when school took him away for a while. One Hannah, so shy she could hardly lift her eyes, helped with the work and was "almost a sister" to Nancy.

There was plenty of work to do in this little house that held the afflicted grandfather and often a boarder, and Nancy did her share. She learned to cook and sew and spin and keep a house in order. Her aunt Jane Merick was later to carry on her instruction, and by the time she was a young girl she could confidently mention in her journal such accomplishments as making pumpkin pies, preserving peaches and even preparing turkey dinners.

After a few years brother and sister were separated for a time. Eldridge was sent to Perch River, to be trained in the general store of Hugh Smith, whose wife was a Spicer cousin. Mr. Smith, upright but narrow, believed in hard work and no play, and young Eldridge during that part of his boyhood did not live in the free pleasant atmosphere that his sister and Clayton cousins enjoyed.

For her, aside from the joys of the river, there were horseback riding, "happy trips into the woods" for trillium and sweet William and jack-in-the-pulpit, visits to the Spicer cousins who overran the stone house at Perch River and shared with her such varied enjoyments as making dams in the brooks, fishing, and family prayer around the great fireplace. Early morning walks—about half an hour after sunrise—became a lovely habit which brought to the pages of her journal charming descriptions of the exquisite morning scenes so characteristic of the St. Lawrence country. She wrote as if to preserve all this blue and gold and opalescence and flame for her own enjoyment.

Nancy took her place early in the Methodist Sunday school and church which her people had helped to found. Maria Fowler was

a pillar of the little church, all the elder Fowlers were active members and even Eldridge Merick, though a "liberal Universalist," became a trustee.

The records of the church do not show the date of Nancy's joining either as probationer or full member, but she is noted in 1854 as a "long time member." She sang in the choir, played the melodeon in church and attended those old Methodist institutions, quarterly meeting, love feast, and class meeting. By the time she was seventeen she was teaching a Sabbath school class of five little boys, two of whom wept when she was to leave them.

With the Fowler and Merick cousins, and part of the time her brother, Nancy's education went on smoothly. Not content with the school that had been set up in Clayton a few years before, Eldridge Merick had taken the initiative in organizing a select school. On his own land near his home he built the "yellow school-house"—a one-room building, painted yellow, where his children and those of cooperative neighbors had the best teachers that the region afforded.

At least six teachers—three women and three men—presided over Nancy's instruction. She dismissed the first, kindly unnamed, in a few lines of a school composition: "She was an '*Old Maid*' there that makes it all out that comprehends the whole. And when she fixed those cold gray eyes and that furrowed forehead for a storm every schollar quailed beneath her gaze."

Then came two younger women, each in succession a boarder in Maria Fowler's home, each truly "dear teacher," beloved and admired—Mary Taggart ("our Mary") and Cordelia Ingerson. Mary and Delia shared happily in the life of the cottage, paid visits after they left Clayton, and held pleasant memories of "the little girl with an inquiring mind." "I felt," wrote Mary Taggart, "that if that inquiring mind was rightly directed it would become strong & possess knowledge *with* understanding."

Three men followed. There is an amusing flicker of schoolgirl rivalry in the journal entries about the third, John Felt. It appears that he was attracted by Harriet Angel—whom indeed he later married—and that Harriet charged Nancy (aged fifteen) with trying to win him from her. "When I fish," writes Nancy, "I fish for fish not for minnows. No the dear she may have him for all my objections."

Maria Fowler saw to it that her charges applied themselves. "Grandma made Eldridge and me study our lessons in the morning. We studied by candle light. That was something to remember. We got up early, and we enjoyed it. In winter Nathan would come over very early from Aunt Jane's house to make our fires."

On her last day at the yellow schoolhouse the fifteen-year-old Nancy in pensive mood told her journal:

"Last day of our school. . . . Our examination yesterday. . . . I have daily crossed the threshold of its door for years—a happy joyous child. There I read my first composition under the guidance of my dear instructress. I look back with pleasure upon my *early years*. And my later years are also fraught with much I love to remember."

A packet of those compositions that she drafted on her slate and read in school or at the "Clayton Literary Association" survives—a packet holding well over a hundred signed by her (signed variously Annette, Nett, Nancie, Nancy, Nettie). The earliest date is 1845, though some of the undated compositions were probably written earlier and the others run almost through her school life. Within the limits of the yellow schoolhouse period there are such titles as "The Glory and Shame of Clayton," "Uncertainty of Life," "Good Behaviour," "A Ramble in the Forest," "Autobiography of a Candle," "Gentleness," "The Little Buisy Bee," "Deal gently with the Stranger's Heart," "Woman the Noblest gift of Heaven," "The Glory of Man Passeth Away," "Impressions on Seeing a frightened mouse."

Vigorous and original in manner, the compositions are highly moral and religious on the pattern of the devout Methodism of the young writer's time. The small girl in retrospective mood even reflects on her giddiness at the age of five. A sense of the swift passage of life, the nearness of death, though characteristic of her day was heightened no doubt by her own loss. Patriotic feeling and fervent admiration of Washington are repeated notes. (" . . . who would fight 7 years 9 months 1 day and not say 'Oh I am tired of fighting I let them have America' I dare say if it had been anybody but Washington, they would have given it up . . .") Intemperance ("Oh drunkenness . . . thou are the thing from whence evry evil flows") received heavy condemnation. Love and enjoyment

of nature are often shown, with special attention to cataracts—so characteristic of the countryside she knew. And though the child's compositions in general are intensely serious a pleasant sense of humor sometimes glints through.

George Washington
 What shall I say - of another
 hero of our country, the who
 fought and fought bravely
 for his own country, who would
 fight 7 years 9 months, 1 day and
 not say "Oh I am tired of
 fighting I let them have America"
 I dare say if it had been any
 body but Washington, they would
 have given it up, but; No he
 fought ~~for~~ the welfare of other
 people and not for him-self,
 he has highly favoured his char-
 acter by this great and noble
 act; Did his father think his
 son was going to make so great

Chapter 3

AWAY AT SCHOOL

IN THE summer after her fifteenth birthday Nancy began her schooling away from home. It was to take her for a year each to three different schools—two Methodist and coeducational, one a famous girls' seminary—with two intervals of a year at home.

The first school was Falley Seminary at Fulton, New York where Nancy was sent in the company of her brother and three Clayton cousins, Ermina and Melzar Merick and Carrie Fowler. Eager though she always was for schooling Nancy dreaded the parting—" . . . tomorrow's sunset finds me in a land of strangers," she wrote in her earliest journal. "I have never been from home before any length of time—and childish tears gushed thick and fast from my unwilling eyes."

Like most summer journeys from Clayton (then still untouched by a railroad), the trip to Fulton began on the St. Lawrence. "This morn at five the Steamer Ontario left Clayton dock fast in the distance—bearing us *away*. Several of our acquaintance parted with us at the wharf notwithstanding the early hour. White handkerchiefs fluttering in the wind & the many responses from the dock made me think truly that I was *leaving home*." Nine hours on the river and Lake Ontario brought them to the port of Oswego, whence the trip continued a few miles inland by the "cars" to Fulton and ended at a house where the girls were to board until the new Seminary building was ready.

These three were known—admiringly—as the "Clayton trio." Seen in a daguerreotype of the period, they were three amiable young ladies, each with a high collar of white lace or embroidery, each with her hair parted in the middle and covering her ears. Nancy's, without wave or puffs, is a lovely frame for her sweet

face with its direct eyes, delicate nose, softly firm lips, and smooth brow. She wears a dark silk with pointed bodice and lace mitts.

The school at Fulton, born in a Presbyterian church sixteen years before, was now Methodist—under the care of the Black River Conference. It had an honorable history, a good standing, and in this year of 1850-1851 more than two hundred students. Eldridge Merick was on the Board of Visitors. There was an adequate faculty and a careful set of regulations which Eldridge Fowler thought “rather strict.” Church attendance was required and students were forbidden on the Sabbath to “go abroad into the fields or frequent the village.” They were forbidden to visit taverns and groceries, or to be absent from their rooms over night without permission. Visits of gentlemen to lady students were of course supervised.

In her diary Nancy has little to say about actual school work, except for the gratifying item that her standing (read out with all the others in chapel) was 496 for one term out of a possible 500, and for another 494. But an old catalogue shows that the Seminary offered its students a chance not only at the classics, French and such stand-bys as Algebra, Willard’s *Universal History*, Astronomy, *Evidences of Christianity* (Paley’s of course), but also Meteorology and, if you please, “Book Keeping.” School began on August first and ran in three terms through June. The tuition depended on what the pupil took. “Higher English, Mathematics, Ancient and Modern Languages,” was \$6.50. Instruction in music mounted to \$12. “Oil Painting, Tufted Embroidery, Satin Work, and Pellis Work” (a mystery, but possibly a kind of taxidermy) were accomplishments to be introduced a little later.

In the fall term the trio had to “mount a long hill three or four times daily,” to reach the Seminary; but on returning from vacation on December 4 they moved into the new hall. It was a handsome four-story brick structure with pillars, cupola, and bell, located on an elevation facing the Public Square and commanding “a delightful and extensive view of the surrounding country.” The Clayton trio had the thrill of being the first diners in the new hall. Here the charges were \$1.50 a week for board and room, “stove, table, washstand, chairs, and the washing of eight pieces.” “Ladies” paid twenty-five cents a week for the carrying of wood to their

rooms during the cold season. Total charges for the year were estimated by the Seminary at about \$150.

A neatly kept account book of "N. M. Fowler" records not her regular school costs, but her incidentals—such items as bonnet lining, .18; collection for sick girl, .13; ride to camp meeting, .25; maple sugar, .10; missionary, .06 and another time .25; going to Oswego, .50.

Evidently Nancy shone at once in the field of writing. One of the editors of Clayton's *Lily of the Valley*, she soon appears as a co-editor of Falley's *Offering* and when the *Offering* was succeeded by the *Sheaf* and the *Eclectic Sheaf*, "N. M. Fowler" continued to edit or serve on a publishing committee. Among her contributions were "Womans Sphere!!," "Sunrise," "Bygone days," "Earthly glory passeth away," and "Gethsemane." The last is the leading contribution in an eleven-page script copy of the *Sheaf* that was read on an important occasion; but let her journal tell it:

"March 7 [1850] This evening the Rev Mr Raymond from Syracuse lectured before the Peithologian Society of the Sem. Before this Society a paper, edited weekly by the Parthenian Soc., is read. The gentlemen of the first mentioned Soc. were anxious that another No. of the 'Sheaf' should be edited and read before them on the evening of the lecture. Julia and myself were appointed the editresses—accordingly this eve we read our paper before a *crowded house* and many were the bright glances turned on us. I was not frightened. The lecture was very good indeed. My company home——"

The blank is hers—typical of her distrust of a journal when the subject was too intimate. Her journal flickers with half references to "moonlight" and "that evening!" and "important letters." But at least once in the Falley period she boldly mentions a name:

"Albert accompanies Carrie and myself to the Sem. I cannot say *I love*, but when I look upon the noble form of *A* a feeling rises in my heart which I fain would, but cannot suppress—and I am obliged to admire. *But really Nette!* is your ability to withstand all such temptations suddenly failed you?

"But mayhap, yes, in all probability, the morrow will banish every thought of *girlish fancy*."

At any rate "A" vanished with little more attention. Nancy

thought on seeing him later that he wasn't as "pretty" as he used to be.

Her outside activities were extensive and apparently delightful. The rules did not interfere with walks in good company along the "foaming Oswego," boating "upon a quiet little lake which sleeps nestled in the forest, a mile from town," chestnutting, sleigh rides, long drives, horseback expeditions with return by moonlight, happy times with visiting relatives, and two pleasant stays with family friends at Oswego. On the more serious side Nancy attended a meeting on the Fugitive Slave Law when feeling against it ran high. She went to temperance meetings, Methodist class meetings and church, and lectures. And throughout it is clear that she was popular with her schoolmates, girl and boy.

A few weeks after her return from Falley Nancy herself became a teacher—in the same yellow schoolhouse where she had been a pupil. "This morning," she wrote on August 20, "I commenced my school. Teaching is something I have, from childhood, loved to think of. I always loved children and to preside over a body of youth and 'to go to Italy' was once the ambition of my life. I think the children seemed pleased with me."

She refers to this first teaching experience only twice more—once to say that she dismissed school so that she could entertain a visitor from Fulton and once to record, "My scholars have been unusually noisy." From the account of her sociable comings and goings, by river and road, one deduces that her first teaching experience did not last many months.

That December Nancy's grandfather died. She was one of those who watched beside him in his last moments. Writing the news to her Uncle Richard, she said:

"You remember R— when you parted with us you said, 'Let me kiss my father for the last time.' Yes—you *did*—for this afternoon at two o'clock he breathed his last. . . . For four days he has lain insensible. But now he has gone to his reward! To occupy that 'mansion' which the Lord 'went to prepare' for the faithful."

The accustomed life in Maria Fowler's "cottage home" was ending. Her helper Hannah had married and left, her son Richard had gone pioneering to Michigan. When Nancy was invited to spend the summer of 1852 in Sandusky, Ohio, with prospect of a year at Troy Female Seminary to follow, Grandmother Fowler

was ready to give up her house and move in with the Mericks. "She says she cannot think of staying when Nancie is gone."

The trip to Sandusky took Nancy into new scenes and experiences. Her Uncle Merick had become interested in the building of a railroad from Sandusky to Newark, Ohio, tapping a wheat region and connecting with his shipping interests. His eldest daughter, Maria—now Mrs. Isaac Lyon—was living in Sandusky. Most of the family visited her during the summer, but Nancy and Melzar were elected to stay for weeks.

In an account of the trip written to her brother Nancy pictures the usual manner of approaching Niagara Falls in May 1852.

At Lewiston "there were about fifteen 4-horse stages waiting for passengers for the Falls. The old railway is abandoned. It was *very cold* indeed. Arrived at the Falls at 11 A.M. So cold we did not go to the Falls. After dinner took cars for Buffalo where we staid over night."

In Sandusky Nancy was delighted with her cousin's "beautiful residence," the blooming gardens and the fine Ohio strawberries. One day they went to Newark on Uncle Merick's railroad and Nettie marveled at the conveniences of the country seat of an acquaintance, "He has tubes carrying water up stairs. His bath room can be furnished with cold or hot water by simply turning a faucet."

But the crowning experience was a dinner in Sandusky at a "splendid place here owned by Mrs. Follett." "A more sumptuous dinner I never sat down to [writes Nancy]—first course was soup—asparagus soup. This was removed. Then came meats and vegetables of every variety—a quantity of catsup, jelly, etc. Next came cold ham and lettuce. That was taken off and pie was served—lemon and cocoanut—very delicious. Next came ice cream. This was all removed and fruit brought on—consisting of oranges, prunes, figs, apples, raisins, etc." She adds, "So after tasting a *little* of each a good appetite must have been satisfied."

Back in Clayton Ermina and Nettie prepared for their second dip into higher education—this time at one of the foremost schools of the day for young ladies. The journal, revived from a summer's sleep, records in September: "Again we grasp the warm hand of dear friends in sad parting, for Mina and I are to become school girls again— Very soon we shall be within the walls of Troy Fem.

Sem., subject to its 'rule and discipline.' " Maria Merick had been a pupil there and the new scholars, accompanied by Mrs. Merick, were cordially welcomed. Nancy was enrolled as "Nancy M. V. Fowler," though where the V. came from no one remains to say. Perhaps she decided occasionally to be Van Esselstyn to the extent of an initial. Throughout her life, indeed, she signed her name variously for reasons unknown—Nancy, Annette or Nettie, the name most used in the long years of her adult life.

Founded by the able and picturesque Emma Willard, Troy Female Seminary was housed in an "immensely large building, sometimes termed 'the prison,' " which stood almost in the center of the "very pretty town" of Troy. Though it was now conducted by her son John Willard and his wife Sarah, Mrs. Emma Willard, retired, still had her home on the campus—a figure of authority and distinction. On their first day she invited Mrs. Merick to bring in her "daughters" for tea. Here she presided as always with courtly kindness in an "ample silk gown and graceful white turban."

Nancy's studies, at least in the first term, were Universal Geography, using the text book written by Woodbridge and Willard; Universal History, taught in connection with Mrs. Willard's chart, the "Temple of Time," wherein groups of pillars, each pillar representing a century, made history vivid; Natural Theology—Paley's; French; Music, with composition exercises once a week and something called "lecture," which seems to correspond to modern "assembly," twice a week. There must have been other subjects too in other terms, for Nancy wrote to her brother at the close of the year: "We are . . . in the middle of examination. Our history comes Monday and Botany Tuesday—I fear and tremble—if I do *well* I will tell you, if I do not, I will say nothing about it and don't say anything to me about it." And in a request manuscript of 1914 about the Seminary, she said: "Miss Hastings had most beautiful ways of teaching hydraulics and hydrostatics."

Modesty alone, it appears, could have caused her concern about the examination, for she was a brilliant student. Letters to her brother show her conscientiousness as well as her deep religious feeling, her quick sympathy:

"I have to regret each night that the day spent has not found me farther advanced up Science hill. I like school—but even here one

may slip through and get a *diploma* without deserving it—that is not the way I should do—I would earn it *or not take it.*”

“Am trying still to live a Christian amid all the temptations of a boarding school. I make many crooked paths but my strength is in my Saviour. . . . My dear brother, death is around us—very near us, and let us be reconciled to God—for what will all the world be to us in death. . . .

“It has been *very, very* cold here today. Just as I had finished that sentence the bell commenced ringing for fire. Oh my heart bleeds for those who are turned out of house and home this stinging cold night. While Mina and I are sitting cozily round our little stove while the fire burns brightly, we forget that our fellow creatures are suffering with cold. And do not all of us shut our hearts to the suffering of the poor and distressed around us. Oh it is a dreadful thing to suffer from cold, want and hunger.”

A few more letters of the young student to aunt and grandmother, more unstudied than those to her brother, give glimpses of her everyday life: Nancy, stronger than Ermina, does the morning work in their little room. Each has served her turn at baking “with great credit,” Nancy wrote (of herself), “to those who have had the care of my early education in that department.” They revel in boxes sent from home containing cakes, morning dresses, aprons, pinking, apples, and cherished daguerreotypes. “We do not take dancing lessons, and have said nothing to our pastor about it.” If this included even the dancing in the dormitory of which the founder warmly approved, then indeed was the Methodism of Nancy and Ermina a sturdy plant.

The same little account book that she used at Falley served also at Troy for one term. Some of the items are: a bonnet, \$3.50; one pair of shoes, \$2.75; another \$1.50; a daguerreotype, \$3.00; a present for Grandma, 50 cents; while a Miss Thompson and a Mrs. Jones each got a gift, costing 25 cents and 12½ cents.

Toward the close of the year Mr. Willard invited the “ladies of the Seminary” to visit his mother—“accordingly at 8½ we repaired to the house of *Madam Emma*. . . . Mattie Burton and myself sang a *duett*. . . . Several others also were sung which helped to enliven the party. . . . ‘Mrs. Emma’ entertained her guests with the ease & ability of a woman many years her junior. I think her to

be a truly noble woman—a pioneer in the cause of female education—by her own exertions she has attained the eminence upon which she stands. May I be like her in some respects however I should not wish to imitate her—for 'tis said that she is very *egotistical*—but if any one has a right to indulge vanity 'tis her."

Nettie—more often Nettie now than Nancy—spent the next year in Clayton while her cousin Ermina went back to Troy. "I know it was not the best for both E. and self to leave Aunt at the same time," she wrote to Eldridge in the fall of 1853. "Although they all said I *must go*, and Mina thought she could hardly go without me, I think I shall be as happy at home this winter trying to make those around me happy as at school." Eldridge had gone that fall to the rough lumbering regions near Lake St. Clair where eastern Michigan meets Canada, working for his youngest uncle, Richard Fowler. During the summer Nettie and her grandmother had visited there and a friendship with an associate of her Uncle Richard was continued by correspondence. It was to give Nettie a thrilling problem later on.

Her winter occupations at Clayton included the usual social interests of a young lady at home and some measure of housework—not heavy probably, for Mrs. Merick always had a helper, but this was a hospitable home and every one took a hand. "Every lesson in the domestic art is *worth gold*—yea more," Nettie wrote.

One of her letters shows her a bit self-conscious, though eager not to be, with friends who had not been away at school. "The girls," she wrote, "all seem *very much pleased* to see me and are really quite friendly. Indeed, they have no reason for *any other* than friendly treatment to me because I have *ever* shown them kindness and attention, when at home, and have even gone out of my way sometimes, so they might not judge me haughty or important."

She must have succeeded, for the letters reveal her in easy association with numerous young people of Clayton and the neighboring villages. She tells her brother faithfully the news of marriages and deaths and parties and who was "paying his distresses" to whom. She sang at a school exhibition, went to an occasional party, exchanged visits with friends and relatives along the river or in Watertown, attended church regularly, and reported enjoyment of a series of Sunday evening lectures on "Ecclesiastical His-

tory." Lectures appeared to interest her more than dances. Telling Eldridge of a ride and ball from which a group of their young Clayton friends returned about *2 o'clock* A.M. (the italics are hers) she adds: "Oh, brother, what is there in such amusements to satisfy the cravings of the immortal mind. I prefer to take a book and peruse—or attend to those duties by which home is made happy. Oh how insignificant will these vanities appear when age dims the eye and whitens the jetty locks of youth."

For the last year of her schooling, 1854-1855, Nettie Fowler went to the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary at Lima, in western New York. She had sought by letter the advice of a friend of her parents, John Dempster, a mighty man in Methodism, then connected with the Methodist General Biblical Institute at Concord, New Hampshire. Addressing the nineteen-year-old girl as "my dear Sister Fowler," Dr. Dempster answered her inquiry about "the most eligible institution for the closing year of your studies." He named the Genesee Wesleyan, another Methodist institution, preferring it to "many fine female schools in New England and elsewhere" because it had "both departments" (coeducation, in short), and in such he believed "a better education is generally obtained."

Even the great Dr. Dempster's word was not accepted without further consideration. Mrs. Merick and Melzar, accompanying Nettie by boat to Rochester, took her in a hack to inspect the recommended seminaries of that city. Later they drove down the plank road to Lima and "so charming a country I never passed through," wrote Nettie.

"Aunt seemed more favorably impressed with this school than with any which we visited, & after dinner, which by the way was the best I ever took in a boarding school, made arrangements for me to stay."

The beauty of setting of this school appealed strongly to Nettie. Writing to her brother shortly after her arrival she said: "Now I sit me down in my uncarpeted cheerless room, No 6 L, 4th Hall, Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. . . . Before me is spread one of the most beautiful landscapes I ever beheld. The Seminary and college buildings are situated upon a high hill; and this circumstance taken in connection with my elevation from the ground renders the view from my window very commanding. The country around here is beautiful—smooth fields, springing with verdure, venerable woods,

just beginning to assume their autumnal tints, while far away in the distance, are the blue hills of Canada." She enjoyed this autumnal beauty, too, as her habitual early morning walks revealed it. One day she wrote: "I chose the path over the gully, through a long row of locusts, to the open woods. The path was thickly strewn with leaves of almost every hue, and still they fell, though not a breath stirred them, still, silently as angels wings they cleft the air."

On the same campus with the Seminary stood Genesee College, also coeducational though men predominated. And in their senior year the Seminary students had their classes in the college. Senior work was evidently what Nettie Fowler took, for she counted it her good fortune to have the college professors as teachers. She liked the school—liked it even better than Troy Female Seminary—and it is a fair guess that she enjoyed having a mixed faculty again, as at Falley, and the interesting association with both men and women students.

The old Record of Studies (whereon her name appears as Nettie M.V. Fowler, no longer Nancy) reveals that she studied French, Rhetoric, Logic, Natural Philosophy and—actually—Electricity, while her journal adds Chemistry, Music, and Oil Painting. This was her first venture into painting and she had her own considered reasons for taking it. "I have taken painting and have made some proficiency in that beautiful art," she wrote after a few months' study. "I deem the fine arts as excellent aids in the development of, or rather in the cultivation of those finer feelings which characterize the truly refined— Not less are they helpful as means of cultivating the moral part of our nature. . . ."

For the first time she was away at school alone and she chose to room alone in order to study better. Knowing this would probably be her last year of "scholastic life," she resolved to "improve it well." And there is evidence in the self-revelations of her journal that she succeeded, not only in her studies but in the development of her mind and the enrichment of her personality.

She had to struggle against the effect of a year's interval in concentrated study. "I must rise *very* early & get my Logic lesson—oh I want so much to have perfect lessons, but do not feel like taking the requisite pains, unless I whip up my forgetful spirits."

Yet for all her self-blame she was confident of her powers. Though she had six weeks' work to do to catch up with her classes

(having entered late because Melzar had been ill) she said, "But that I can do in one," and when a test in Chemistry (the subject she found most difficult) was given to the college but not to the seminary classes she was sure she could have passed it. She was no doubt right, for 40 "merits" being the maximum she achieved a standing for the first term of 37.

That fall Nettie was shocked to learn that her Uncle Merick's extensive business had failed. The rapid growth of the railways had been a blow to shipbuilding in the East. Clayton was proving to be rather too far out of the main currents of trade anyway. New enterprises into which Mr. Merick had entered farther west had suffered severe reverses: a mill had burned, a small railroad venture had collapsed, his flour consignees in New York had failed. In announcing his failure Ermina Merick wrote: "The stroke they say will be felt from one end of the Lakes to the other." She went on to tell of the economies the family was practicing. "In reference to getting you a new hat, I don't know what Mother will decide to do."

Nettie wrote home a letter filled with sympathy for her uncle; she offered to end her school days with the first term and added that she needed no new dresses and "of course" would wear her blue hat again. Her journal further reflected her warmth of heart and her developing powers. After the first wave of sympathy she writes, "The next instant I felt so strong—so resolute I thought *nothing* too great for me to undertake—I never felt so much like a woman in all my life."

Her offer to quit school was not accepted though her brother was allowed to help with her tuition. It was perhaps a point, so far as Nettie's budget was concerned, that the annual charges were only a little over \$200 at Lima as against \$350 at Troy.

To spare expense when the term closed "poor Nette" remained at the Seminary. But she had a pleasant time, visiting with the few others who stayed and the faculty, in walks and leisurely study, and—though she did not approve of more than a "very little fiction occasionally"—in devouring *Ivanhoe*!

After the family situation was somewhat adjusted, Melzar Merick came to Genesee Wesleyan too for the second and third terms. Cousin Delia Fowler came with him and shared Nettie's room.

The life the girls lived in the Seminary hall was simple and

strict. They were required to "furnish their own lights, pails, wash-bowls, towels and mirrors." The pails must be filled at night as a precaution against fire. For a fresh drink they went down from that fourth floor to a well. The lights were, luxuriously, oil lamps supplemented by candles.

There were careful rules to be observed at mealtime: quiet assembly, silence until "the religious services of the table" were performed and—a thing Nettie Fowler didn't like—no one was to retire until the table was duly dismissed. Two long tables extended the length of the dining room, young ladies sitting on one side and young gentlemen opposite with faculty interspersed. Food and dishes were brought from the kitchen by the "wash women" in a little car which ran on a track between the tables.

In the spring term Nettie and Delia lived in a boarding place away from the Seminary and Melzar Merick could come in to see his cousins often, "a privilege which was denied us at the Sem.," commented Nettie, adding "although our board is not any better here than there. We do not find any fault—for I suppose the kind of food we eat makes but little difference provided it be wholesome. We are confined to 'Ham' principally." (In later years she would hardly have considered that "Ham principally" met the requirements of wholesomeness.)

On the religious side, in addition to chapel and church, there was a missionary society in which Miss Fowler was prominent. It was a joint society of young people from Seminary and College, evidently designed to combine those two great activities of all missionary societies—study and money raising. Miss Fowler was a member of the "Board of Managers," one of the two "essayists" of her year and at different times librarian, collector, and secretary. Nettie Fowler must have been among Genesee Wesleyan's brightest missionary lights: she was one of three students for whom the school group appropriated money to make them life members of the "parent society."

Many friendships marked this year at Lima as had been true at Falley and at Troy. A friendship formed with Helen Hard was to last throughout the two women's lives. Nettie's first impressions were favorable but cautious: "Miss Hard, a new acquaintance & myself hired a horse & carriage & drove around the country. We

had a fine ride beside being quite independent. I took tea with her—my impression is that she is a lovely girl—but I have only a short acquaintance as yet & first appearances are sometimes deceiving. We are in three classes together.” But a year and a half later Nettie’s journal was recording her rapturous hopes of a visit from this friend whom she loved—“oh, so much.” Always her words of appreciation for special friends were warm, springing from a great capacity for love together with an aptitude for enthusiastic expression.

There were men friends too—appearing in a “memorable” scientific exploring tour in that spring term, a certain jaunt by moonlight, an episode connected with crossing a plank, and some special farewells. Though Nettie did not trust her journal with names, her letters sometimes illuminate. Even over the years her confidences shall be kept—though for the matter of that they were all pretty much in terms of ecstatic memories of glamorous moments and nobody really expecting much to happen for years, if ever.

But during that year at Lima a proposal came to her—the flowering of her summer visit to the wooded region of St. Clair. This was not, to be sure, her first proposal, but one of a type always flattering to a very young lady—the avowal of a somewhat older man already at work in the world. The incident holds special interest because it brought out her attitude at twenty toward marriage. After postponing reply to the question from the timber lands until she should be free of school, she finally asked her brother’s advice, submitting for his approval a copy of her proposed reply. “I have always put those things far in the future,” she wrote, “and I am not *now* in any hurry. Still I think a young lady may wait too long and . . . let the right one pass by. I am yet, however, to be convinced that the *right* one has arrived.”

Before her brother made satisfactory reply she wrote that she had her “*mind about made up on the point*. . . . I want *no one* whose avowed object is—‘improving their own condition.’” Her brother’s comment was downright: “A person who has loved so many young ladies must have a very large hart. . . . However if you think anything of him lets know it, and done with it I shall then know better how to talk.” A few more weeks of delay and then her “letter of non-acceptance” (in the rejected one’s phrase)

went out. It was received with disappointment but with a conviction that her conclusions had emanated "from a kind and true heart."

Genesee Wesleyan Seminary carried on about eight years past its centennial, was devoted to other uses for a time, closed, reopened as Genesee Junior College, and in 1951 closed again. Long ago the men's college answered a call to Syracuse and became Syracuse University and the girls inherited its old College Hall with classic pillars which, gleaming high on its hill, for many years caught the eye of approaching pupils. Here Miss Fowler attended chapel and classes. In the Seminary building her room can not be precisely identified, but one may look from the fourth floor hall window upon the same lovely view that enraptured her. In this hall, too, was the room of the "Ladies' Literary" to which she belonged, though thirteen years later no less a person than Frances E. Willard, preceptress at the Seminary, changed its name to the "Ingelow."

Apparently Nettie Fowler's course of study did not lead to a diploma. Though she had taken advanced studies, she was not one of the group that in June, 1855 stood in modestly long white muslin gowns on the chapel platform and one by one read their essays and accepted their sheepskins. She doesn't explain. Perhaps she deliberately chose subjects she wished to take, regardless of diploma, or perhaps she had expected to be in school longer. But here her formal education ended.

Long afterward, looking back to Genesee Wesleyan, the former Miss Fowler called it "a fine school."

Chapter 4

COURTSHIP

IN HER twenty-second year the pattern of Nettie Fowler's life suddenly changed. She went to Chicago, to that wooing and marriage which made a fairy-tale transformation in the destiny of the young girl from a St. Lawrence River village.

She spent the year after her return from Lima at home—in the usual activities of her Clayton circle with occasional visits to friends and relatives in near-by villages. She revisited Falley Seminary. She spent time sewing in the company of her beloved grandmother. She wrote with fair faithfulness during this period in her journal, devoting considerable attention to self-examination. And she reveled in the beauty of the St. Lawrence River scene, especially in spring.

Once she confided to her journal a pleasant conceit: "I would I could seal up a chamber of my soul so full of gladness, for the 'dark days'—when every gushing fountain seems dried up. I could open it and feast upon the luxury so much out of its season. We gather fruits in their season and 'hermetically' seal them for Winter—when opened they come out fresh as when plucked. Why could we not operate in a similar manner with emotions of joy and mirth?"

The most notable social event of the twelve months was a trip to Montreal in November 1855—a cold and dreary trip at that season unwillingly undertaken by Nettie and Ermina on an errand for Mrs. Merick. They stayed with friends of the Mericks and were guests at a concert by Ole Bull. The next day the famous violinist was invited to their host's for dinner. Nettie was deeply thrilled and admiring. Ole Bull talked to her of music, cautioning her against "music falsely so called" and praising the music of the old masters. Before he left, he wrote for her "a little harmony," sign-

ing it. She carefully preserved the souvenir of this memorable meeting.

"A trip to Montreal costs only the time," Nettie wrote, meaning a trip on the family's steamers. There was reason for considering such matters. For Mr. Merick's business affairs had not recovered. By the summer of 1856 he was on the point of changing his base to Detroit. He was much from home and during that spring and summer his wife and daughter Ermina spent time with relatives in Detroit and Chicago. Eager to do something to help in the family depression, Nettie had again become a teacher in the "yellow school-house," attending to household duties as well, and in the summer her health broke. Coming home on a visit, the eldest Merick daughter, Maria—Mrs. Isaac Lyon, now of Chicago—found Nettie sick from "hooping cough and overwork," took her to Rochester where she bought dresses for her, then to a water cure at Elmira, New York. Here Mrs. Lyon, Nettie Fowler, and Ermina Merick all entered as patients. Thanks to Nettie's journal we have a picture of the life they led there, a life typical of the popular water cure of the time.

"Today we have been *initiated*. Rise at *five*—a cold pour—walk up a high hill—breakfast Graham pudding potatoes, milk, brown bread & butter. At nine we go through all the gymnastic exercises in the Bowling Alley—at 10 o'clock—a half bath. After which we may sleep—or roll in the alley or do anything we please till dinner, at 12. This repast is very plain—one kind of meat & two vegetables, bread & for dessert some kind of farinaceous pudding. Amuse ourselves until $\frac{1}{2}$ past 3. Exercise then baths again—sleep till supper if we choose. Today the weather induces sleep if nothing else would. Tea is very plain—cracked wheat milk, brown bread, one kind of plain cake After tea the patients assemble in the parlor & devote themselves to sociability. Music & the Doctor encourages Dancing &c—baths at $8\frac{1}{2}$ —retire at 9. Thus the day ends."

Under this treatment, Nettie was the first to recover. Leaving in early August, after visiting a Lima school friend, she returned to Clayton to pack and presently accompanied Mrs. Lyon to the West. The plan was that Nettie should superintend the care of her cousin's two children while Mrs. Lyon continued her pursuit of health. But in it, too, was the thought of relieving Mr. Merick of responsibility for Nettie.

The journey probably began as usual in a family-built steamboat, swinging out from the dock off Clayton's main street, threading the islands upstream, calling at Cape Vincent just before the river widened into the lake. Thence the well known trip, no doubt much as Nettie described it four years before when she went to Sandusky, ending in a train ride from Toledo or Detroit to Chicago.

How she must have savored it all with her eagerness for experience and knowledge! One wishes she had left some word of her impressions of the young prairie city. Thus far in her life she had known perhaps a dozen or so New York and Canadian towns and villages: Montreal and perhaps Quebec; Troy and Rochester, in New York; Sandusky and Newark, in Ohio; just possibly New York City. Chicago of 1856 must have presented many sharp differences from these other towns and cities.

By that time it had a population of about 90,000 and was growing with the astounding swiftness that had marked its development since the early thirties. Nettie must have seen marble palaces as well as brick buildings and many wooden structures. She would have been aware, in parts of the city, of wooden sidewalks that for ten years were to send the pedestrian clambering up and down as the street levels were adjusted. There were flatness and prairie and mud in place of Nettie's native hills, noisy vital energy in place of village quiet. The opening of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, only eight years before, that put Chicago on the waterway from New Orleans to Buffalo had given its waterfront—of lake and river—a colorful variety of vessels, of traffic, of sailors that must have had special interest for a girl reared on another shore line.

Whether she liked or disliked Chicago Nettie probably found life pleasant in her cousin's North Side home near the river on Pine Street—as the present North Michigan Avenue was then named. Maria had lived there long enough to have friends and other Clayton cousins had made acquaintances in Maria's circle. Besides, the Lyons attended the neighboring North Presbyterian Church and before long Nettie Fowler lent her sweet contralto voice to its choir. Just when she joined this church, changing from Methodist to Presbyterian, is not known. The Chicago Fire consumed that information in the North Church membership roll. But the Methodist Church record at Clayton shows opposite her name, in "Revised List, May 1857," this entry: "Removed without letter." And

there is evidence that as a young married woman she belonged to the North Presbyterian Church in Chicago. Was it a cousin or a suitor or a husband who influenced her to make the change?

Living so near the river as it flowed toward the Lake (this was long before Chicago highhandedly reversed the current), she must often have seen the McCormick reaper factory—impressive buildings of brick lying along the river only a short walk from her door. It would have been strange if she had not heard the story of invention back of that flourishing factory and of the man who was responsible for it. Perhaps she wondered about him—all the more because he was, amazingly, still a bachelor in his late forties. What she might have read about him at that time, if there had been a *Who's Who* in 1856, would have been about this:

McCORMICK, Cyrus Hall, inventor and mfr., b. Rockbridge Co., Va., Feb. 15, 1809; s. Robert and Mary Ann (Hall) McC.; educated at home and in "field school"; invented reaper, 1831; successful in public trials 1831 and 1832; patented reaper, 1834; received council medal at World's Fair, London, 1851. Invented also hillside plow, self-sharpening horizontal plow and improved grain cradle. Established reaper manufactory in Chicago, in 1847; pres't. His reaper won the highest awards of the international expositions in London in 1851 and at Paris in 1855. Unmarried. Presbyterian (O.S.). Home: Chicago. Office: C. H. McCormick Reaper Works, Chicago.

If she had heard those items, she would have heard more—something of the man himself—over six feet tall, dark, strong, vigorous, handsome, a driving force in business, a power in conservative church circles. But she would not have seen Mr. McCormick. For he spent little time in Chicago. His two brothers, William and Leander, ran the business under their elder brother's direction by letter, while he attended to patents, lawsuits, and numerous other interests in Washington and New York, with occasional short visits home.

But early in the summer of 1857 Mr. McCormick came to Chicago, for the first time in nearly two years, and remained for a number of weeks. And it is not too much to assume that the unusual

length of his stay was a direct result of meeting the girl from Clayton.

This meeting, one gathers, all but failed to occur. Nettie Fowler had been in Chicago from August 1856 till June 1857—fall, winter, spring—before fate signaled. No doubt her days were agreeably filled with household duties, social life, the choir, and musical events: she attended Henry Ahner's afternoon concerts, heard the pianist Thalberg and probably others. And her enjoyment as she wrote of it to Helen Hard was rapturous. Besides there were suitors to claim the attention of the lovely girl from the East. But all this was to end—she was to return to Clayton in June, whether to remain or with plans for return does not appear. The day for departure was set.

But the day had to be changed because the intended escort, at the last moment, failed. And so she stayed to attend a certain party. And so Cyrus Hall McCormick came to the party and met her.

Thus run the brief recollections of that cousin with whom she lived.

As for the party itself, the story depends on the recollection by the oldest son, Cyrus H. McCormick, of various accounts given him. One day, according to the story, as the brothers Cyrus and Leander were riding on horseback across the new Rush Street bridge, Cyrus noticed a beautiful young woman passing them: a tall, dark-haired, fair, rosy girl, moving with singular swift, free grace. Attracted he asked his brother Leander about her. Leander said she was a stranger (for in that time strangers in the neighborhood were discernible), but that his wife Henrietta would know. Henrietta did know. The girl from the East had been living for some time in the Lyon household; she was Mrs. Lyon's cousin, Nettie Fowler; and a meeting could be arranged if "C.H." desired it. "C.H." did so desire. The Lyons and Nettie Fowler were asked to a tea at the Leander McCormicks' in a parlor that (if Mrs. Leander McCormick still had the furnishings that she proudly described ten years before) was vivid with a flowered red and green carpet and cushioned mahogany chairs. Here, it appears, Mr. McCormick made full use of his opportunities. Impetuous, forceful, not to say dominating, he took possession of Miss Fowler, seated her with him on a sofa and completely ignored the claims of other

guests. But after all the party was probably arranged for his benefit.

There are other stories about the first meeting: that Cyrus McCormick saw Nettie Fowler in a doorway and announced instantly that there was the girl he would marry; that he passed the Lyons' house when Nettie was outside about some task and stopped to speak to her; that he was attracted first by hearing her sing in the North Church choir.

But the only contemporaneous reference to the first meeting is in a letter of Mr. McCormick to Nettie Fowler—his first. He told her that he had heard much favorable report of her on his return to Chicago, and he went on: "On my first acquaintance with you I was satisfied that your merits had not been overestimated. . . . The more I have seen & known of you since, the more deeply I have been impressed by your merits & charms, until I became a captive at your feet."

This letter is one of a little package of Mr. McCormick's letters that his wife treasured throughout life—"a package I always regarded," she wrote two months after his death, "as the most precious material thing I possessed. . . . They are the honest, manly and ardent expression of his devoted love for me. They glow with fervent fires of a manly love. They are love-letters."

Her own letters are not present, nor does she ever refer to them; but Mr. McCormick quotes from them liberally.

In his first letter, July 23, 1857 it is clear that he has already proposed. Before the date of the second, September 5, the momentous question facing Nettie Fowler had been carried home for the advice of her beloved grandmother, her uncle, and others. On August first Nettie, no doubt well chaperoned and accompanied by her little cousin, Jeannie Lyon, arrived at Clayton. Not long after, Isaac Lyon came on, bringing his young son. And in the last of the four weeks Nettie spent at home, visiting, riding, boating, Mr. McCormick arrived. No account of the visit remains—one can only guess at the cordial reception given the Chicago man in the pleasant Clayton home. Mr. Merick unfortunately was absent on business during this important visit. A plan was made for him to meet the Chicago-bound group at Cape Vincent on the return trip. But owing to trouble with the railroad engine he arrived at the Cape just five minutes after the lake boat had sailed with Nettie, Mr. Lyon, and the two children. Mr. McCormick, however, waited

after "having the pain" to part with Nettie on the boat and spent the evening with Mr. Merick, who was of course acting as father.

Mr. Merick's report in a letter to Nettie was on the whole favorable. He admitted that, as she had anticipated, his first impression was not without reservations, but he had found himself well inclined by Mr. McCormick's personal appearance, his fund of information, his strong common sense. He gathered the impression that Mr. McCormick would strive to make his wife happy. Seeking to give a candid opinion, he referred to Mr. McCormick's comment on himself as "not a ladies' man," cited as other objections his age and the possibility that socially he might not be up to her "ideas of what Nettie's husband should be," urged her to be certain in her own heart that she would love him even if his "yellow dust" should fail. Definitely he left the choice with her, delicately urging her to come to a decision.

Mr. McCormick himself, writing to Nettie after he had gone back to New York, reported that Mr. Merick "seemed favorably inclined toward the consummation of the affair between us in marriage," and went on to "ask", "beg", "pray" her to marry him in October. But despite his eagerness he assured her "I feel dearest Nettie, that you will understand and appreciate my position in this matter, which is, in short, that, loving you most dearly as I do, and have done since my first acquaintance with you,—regarding you then, and since, as possessing peculiar and rare charms and personal attraction: if it were possible to love you an hundredfold more than I do I could in no case desire your hand without your heart."

By the end of August Nettie was again with her cousin in Chicago, and Mr. McCormick was there in October. "The many pleasant rides which were planned," wrote Maria Lyon, "gave them opportunities for better acquaintance." And whenever parted a correspondence went on between them.

He continued to press his suit ardently, not hesitating to relate his sufferings from suspense and uncertainty. He wrote: "Oh, sweet Nettie, how could you say to me, as you did, 'be not disappointed'! As well might it be said to one safely conducted through the severest storm, on Erie, by a guardian *angel*, 'be not disappointed if on reaching the head of the *cataract* I should leave you to your fate!'" He pointed out the inconsistency between her admission that perhaps she loved him as much as she could without "years of

companionship" and her plea for "the test of time", and jubilated to his brother that her letter was a "virtual acceptance!" Finally she admitted that she hesitated, in spite of her interest, because of a certain trait of his character which she feared would cause both great unhappiness—a want of proper appreciation of the opinions of others, a "self-confidence that brooks no denial—a resolute determination to overcome every obstacle—a hardness and blindness of purpose that will not quit."

All of which Mr. McCormick met with complete self-confidence. Without fully admitting the charge he did grant that he might exhibit a strong will in his dealings with "gentlemen" in business; but as to her he asserted: "I do not think there is a man in the world who would strive more to please you than I should do—no one whose disposition and manner would be more under your control and influence than would mine as your husband."

The protestation if not the argument of this letter of November 26, 1857 evidently won the day. For on December 7 Mr. Lyon sent a dispatch: "Expect favorable answer this week I wrote today." The happy lover wrote at once that the dispatch had produced "a calm and heavenly sensation . . . whilst contemplating with tears of pleasure and gratitude the priceless prize I felt I had won, I yet felt that the blessing was from God." He subscribed himself "Yours most devotedly till death." The religious note was in harmony with earlier expressions in his letters. "Our religious sympathies seem perfectly mutual," he wrote. And Nettie, writing her friend Helen Hard about her engagement, said, "If any one thing has ever occupied my mind and engaged my petitions at the throne of grace, it is the thing which is *now* to be counted among the events which will probably occur."

Whether the wedding should be in Clayton or in Chicago was a difficult question to decide. The Clayton people were eager to have it there; but the failure of Grandmother Fowler's health and of Mr. Merick's business counted. Nettie apparently felt the weight of these considerations and gently suggested that a visit after the wedding might be the best course. In the tender warmth of her feeling for the dear grandmother she even offered to give up "every plan I have" if she were needed. But eagerness to go on with her plan runs strongly beneath the offer. Maria Fowler herself, though

grieved, was reconciled and advised that Mr. McCormick's convenience be consulted.

There was a question, too, about the date; but this was on Mr. McCormick's side. The Manny case—a suit brought by Mr. McCormick against a rival reaper maker for infringement of patents—which had long been pending, threatened to interfere. But after several dizzying adjustments of the wedding date the suit was postponed and January 26 was finally set.

Unfortunately we can see the wedding preparations only through the eyes of the bridegroom-elect rather than those of the bride-to-be. Nettie stayed on at the Lyons' and there made herself ready. Mr. Merick, distressed because he could not do for her as he would, asked her to have Mr. Lyon take care of her needs and let him settle later, sending only a trifle—all he could spare. And her brother diverted from the business he and Melzar Merick were in money to help with Nettie's wedding.

Meantime Mr. McCormick entered heartily into McCormick family preparations to welcome the bride and, in particular, for the reception to be given in William McCormick's house at the bridegroom's expense. In the same letter that bore back to Chicago Mr. Lyon's good news, Mr. McCormick wrote, "And I suppose you & L.J. will between you now at least get a good carriage." He was pleased at reports of the Lyons' plans, "It would seem from what you have said that they mean to have a *considerable company*, and I expect they will—I suggested *when there* that we should come out before the people of Chicago &c." Later, when the reception was under discussion, he worried about the small size of William's house—though as a matter of fact it was a new house, on Rush Street, and according to the reporter took care of five hundred guests during the evening. "If done," he wrote, "it will take at least \$500 to provide the repast. . . . It *must* be a splendid affair, if at all! . . . A very large invitation should be given, if beyond a limited circle of friends—and which probably *should be so*, to be sociable, and make acquaintances."

By mid-January the bridegroom-to-be was giving meticulous directions about the provision of white silk vests for "the gentlemen," and about the care of his own clothes. His instructions on this latter point illustrate his characteristic regard for appearance;

he might be absorbed in business, but not to the extent of being unaware of fashions for men. "My clothes . . . should be pressed, so as to be clear of all wrinkles, and shirts washed, or done up anew, well stiffened (more than any of yours—they are not now quite enough) but *not glazed* in the ironing." According to a tentative plan his clothes were to be sent in a trunk to the Tremont House, where presumably he would spend the brief interval between his arrival and the wedding day. By this time, all being in train, his mind was free from anxiety and he could write in lighter mood, "I presume I must expect to come in for my share of petticoat government, now."

Of "Miss F.'s" corresponding plans we learn from Mr. McCormick that "Mr. L. writes that much talk and calculation upon the wedding—and *great suitableness* expressed &c." It is a tradition that Nettie Fowler made a point of having a wedding gown strictly in accordance with her means, declining her betrothed's offer to provide a richer one. But though Mr. McCormick's wedding coat was carefully kept, labeled in his wife's hand "Father's wedding coat," there is no trace of her wedding gown—perhaps because a simple dress had no future in a prosperous woman's wardrobe and so, packed away, was lost in the Chicago Fire. She did accept the groom's eager offering—as Christmas and wedding gift—of diamonds—necklace, brooch, bracelet, ring. As for the rest of her trousseau, her cousin Ermina Merick wrote, "Nette is very considerate in her purchases for her bridal outfit, does not desire much at present and will only have a few dresses."

The wedding took place at the Lyons' home with the Reverend Dr. Nathan L. Rice, pastor of the North Presbyterian Church and a close friend of Mr. McCormick, performing the ceremony. To the diary of Ermina Merick we are indebted for the only manuscript account discovered (her cousin Nettie having disappointingly left blank pages between August 6, 1857 and June 22, 1858):

"26 Tuesday—Nettie was married this morning at 12½ o'clock I was bridesmaid, Eldridge Groomsman.

"Maria had everything prepared in the best possible manner. Refreshments &c just suitable for such an occasion. Mr. McC. looked his best, and the bride also, although the services tended to move Nettie to tears which gave her a pensive look.

"Received calls from 1 to 3 P.M.—

Evening. Mrs. W. S. McCormick gave a very large and elegant party. Table very beautiful. I might give the full description but will not as I intend to keep the comments of the editor."

Alas, the only "comments of the editor" available fail to answer the questions that a modern society reporter would include as simple routine. A paragraph in the *Chicago Weekly Press* of January 30, 1858 reads:

MARRIED

On Tuesday, Jan. 26th, at the residence of I. L. Lyon, Esq., No. 17 Pine Street, by Rev. Dr. Rice, Cyrus H. McCormick, to Miss Nettie Fowler, all of this city.

About the evening reception there is more, but not enough. The same paper, on January 27, recorded:

One of the most pleasant and hospitable residences in the North Division was thrown open last evening, and despite the unfavorable weather . . . the guests gathered and filled the apartments to overflowing. They came and seemed scarcely to add to the number, they went and were little missed, as carriage after carriage deposited its freight of fair women and brave men to take their places. Within, all was gaiety and the sound of music, and the murmur of conversation, and the merry laugh. . . .

There was, according to the memory of the small boy of the house—William G. McCormick—a charming feature known as the promenade, wherein all the company, in couples, marched to and fro and round and round.

The party was the largest, and one of the most brilliant of the season, and will be marked and memorable in festive annals. . . .

Our lady readers will be on tip-toe to learn of the bride, and how she was dressed, and who was there and how they were dressed, and who was the belle of the evening,—who besides the beautiful bride was the observed of observers. We suppose all who were there have informed those in the immediate vicinity, who were in this respect less favored, that the bride wore a white

silk dress with an overdress of tulle, that those who heard of the rich trousseau looked to see diamonds and saw nothing of ornament to add to, without increasing, the simplest and therefore the highest of adornment of beauty, a simple wreath and bouquet of white flowers.

Of the wedding gifts, and diamonds we have small need to speak. To wings fleeter than ever vouchsafed to local items—(will the ladies, dear angels, forgive us if we say it)—have been given the report of the generous richness of the trousseau, and we have no mind to spoil by anticipating, the telling of the same, for any of our fair readers. . . .

Though the report of a “rich” trousseau does not agree with tradition and probability, perhaps the reporter was merely prophetic, referring to the fine clothes that the proud bridegroom was soon to shower on his young bride.

PART II
HELPMEET

Chapter 5

HONEYMOON AND HOUSEKEEPING

THE honeymoon was only about twelve days long. But it included attendance at a second wedding and a trip in double bridal party to Nettie's home in Clayton—the visit that Nettie had promised her failing grandmother. Her cousin Ermina's diary gives the outline: The party, including at least Miss Merick and perhaps Eldridge Fowler, traveled by rail via Detroit and Buffalo to the little town of Jordan, New York. Here they spent "Nettie's first Sabbath since her marriage," attending church in the morning, reading and singing in the afternoon, driving—whether by carriage or stage—three miles to Elbridge that evening. Here on the following day, again at the polite hour of "12 ½," Eldridge Fowler and Mary Louise Skinner were married.

This was the first meeting of Nettie and Mary Louise, though at the instance of Eldridge the two girls had corresponded a little. Mary Skinner had written to Nettie one of those careful letters that to many a modern girl would seem like a passage composed in a dead language. ". . . It is a bond of union among strangers even, to know they have learned the same lessons, have communed with the same spirits, are familiar with the same authors' minds, have the same *great* end in view. . . . The life of the *faithful* teacher . . . is one which is crowned with bays to which but few of earth's honors are kindred. . . . I felt that our acquaintance continued when I knew that we had been sister teachers. But still more than *this*, I have heard of you as a *Christian*. With what earnest yearnings does the heart move out to find its sister spirits made pure in the same fountain."

At the time of his marriage Eldridge was selling ships' stores in Detroit in partnership with his cousin Melzar Merick—not a

very prosperous business, though later he was to acquire great wealth.

From Elbridge the double honeymoon party, now eight in all, proceeded by pleasant stages to Clayton. "Conveyances were ready at Chaumont to take us home," Ermina Merick wrote in her diary. "Found plenty of snow. The brides enjoyed a sleigh ride—The merry bells added much to render the occasion a happy one." There was "such a dinner as would suit an epicure" at Clayton, and on the next day a goodly assemblage of relatives where no doubt the impressive elder bridegroom was not only welcomed but well studied. He reported to his brother William that he "had a pleasant slyride at Clayton, New York, and a very pleasant time during the rounds to this city etc."

"This city" was Washington to which the McCormicks and Ermina Merick had come after a fascinating weekend in New York. Miss Merick was along because she had accepted Mr. McCormick's invitation to stay for some weeks with his bride. She was "a very sweet dispositioned lady," Mr. McCormick wrote, and he was generous enough to put up with the presence of a third person in order to give Nettie company during his busy hours. The three arrived at six in the morning of February 9, the day after the bride's twenty-third birthday, at the end of a twelve-hour trip in which they had "changed cars about half a dozen times." "Mr. McCormick went out to business," Ermina continued. "Nettie & I took a quiet sleep—breakfasted in our room." Then, refreshed, the two young women set out, with what thrilled excitement can be imagined, to open their Washington oyster. They began with the Capitol and reached a high point that very first night when with Mr. McCormick they attended President Buchanan's levee in the White House, forming part of the colorful line presented to the bachelor President and his niece, the beautiful Harriet Lane, "lady of the White House" during her uncle's administration.

Miss Lane, Ermina wrote, was "plainly attired in a half mourning silk with a simple necklace of pearls." Her brother had died and the tone of administration entertainments had been softened to a lower key. This "half mourning silk" of course spread over hoops. But what did the bride wear? Ermina Merick, alas, does not say. Mr. McCormick, eager to adorn his lovely young wife, may have availed himself of a Saturday afternoon in New York to enrich

her simple wardrobe; and there were his wedding gifts of diamond necklace, brooches, and ring for adornment.

The post-honeymoon life began at Brown's Hotel (later known as the Metropolitan), where the McCormicks awaited the outcome of the Manny case and also of a suit for the extension of Mr. McCormick's 1845 patent. On the very next day after arrival Nettie and Ermina were in the Supreme Court Chamber attending the first hearing on the Manny case—the opening arguments by one of Mr. McCormick's attorneys, Edward N. Dickerson of New York. The suit, brought by Mr. McCormick, was for alleged infringements of details of his patents of 1845 and 1847 by the John H. Manny machines. It had already run a long course and now at the climax—appeal to the United States Supreme Court—Mr. Manny was dead and the suit was against his associates and heirs.

It was a famous case with control of the entire industry practically at stake. The Manny side had a formidable battery of lawyers—George Harding of Philadelphia, Peter H. Watson of Washington, Edwin M. Stanton, destined to be Secretary of War. Another name is of interest. When the United States District Court was to hear the case at Springfield, Abraham Lincoln was chosen by Manny's counsel as an addition to their battery of legal talent. He was retained even when the case was moved to Cincinnati, but his colleagues maneuvered him into the background and did not permit him, though he was well prepared, to speak. Mr. McCormick's chief attorneys were Edward N. Dickerson of New York and Reverdy Johnson of Maryland.

With all this, and more, the young Mrs. McCormick was familiar. Now she was present at the final scene in the Supreme Court Chamber. This was a room in the basement of the Capitol, directly under the Senate Chamber which in less than three years the Supreme Court was to take over. Here, presumably in the seats reserved for spectators, the two young women sat, well able to see and hear all and no doubt very visible. Though no one tells us what they wore, it seems probable that the bride was radiant in honeymoon finery. Hoops and bonnets were of course in the picture.

The two sat faithfully through the arguments on Manny's side on the two days following the opening for Mr. McCormick and on February 17 through the closing argument by Dickerson. They

were present when some weeks later the Supreme Court's opinion was handed down—an opinion adverse to Mr. McCormick.

How early Mr. McCormick made the pleasing discovery that his charming young wife was actually capable of entering into his business counsels, one can only surmise. Certainly he couldn't have expected to find an associate in the reaper business when he married a girl twenty-six years his junior, whose business experience was limited to a little care of her small inherited property and whose business background was not even agriculture but ships. And this in a day and age when women were not supposed to understand business anyhow. But there are at least slight indications in this Washington period of what was to come. "Mr. McCormick," wrote the diarist, "has been discussing the Reaper question. Nettie & self have spent the time in sewing." A suggestion there of the long years in which Mr. McCormick was to discuss all of his questions with his wife and seek her opinion. Letters written to Mrs. McCormick by her husband in the early years of their marriage mingle tender, loving concern for her health and happiness with information about business—lawsuits and reaper improvements with the obvious confidence that she will understand all.

Meantime the two young cousins, sometimes under his escort, oftener not, were most industrious sightseers with time out for Nettie's music lessons. They took walks endlessly. They went to "Mr. Corchoran's picture gallery"; to the Daguerrian gallery where Nettie got a "fair picture"; to Mr. Phelps' gallery where they saw Harriet Hosmer's statue of Beatrice Cenci. They attended lectures at the Smithsonian—one by Edward Everett on "Charity," and here one evening they heard Mr. Root sing "The Winter Wind."¹

The cousins shopped in Baltimore, visited the Navy Yard, went to Mount Vernon where "everything about the place gave evidences of decay." Repeatedly they sat for hours in Congress, hearing heated arguments over the Lecompton constitution for Kansas. All three were well known at Dr. Phineas Gurley's church, the New York Avenue Presbyterian, and the young women, at least,

¹ Presumably George F. Root, singing Henry Russell's "Wind of the Winter Night,"

went to the Union Prayer Meetings that were sweeping the country in a revival.

There was purely social life too in this gay Washington not yet fully aware of deepening shadows. Mr. McCormick had many friends in Washington and no doubt took pride in exhibiting his lovely young wife. At a party given by Miss Saunders, a step-daughter of Postmaster General Aaron V. Brown, "Nettie dressed in white satin." They were guests at a party given by Mrs. Floyd, wife of the Secretary of War. They called on Lord and Lady Napier at the British Embassy. Judge Merrick, justice of the Circuit Court of the District of Columbia, and Mrs. Merrick were calling acquaintances and continued to be friends. Mr. Edmund Burke, former Commissioner of Patents, Attorney General Jeremiah Black, Jacob Thompson, Secretary of the Navy, were on their calling list. Sometimes they drove; occasionally Nettie drove with Mrs. Joseph Holt, wife of the Commissioner of Patents. The young women spent much time with a friend, Mattie Ready, who later was to marry John Hunt Morgan, dashing Confederate raider.

Evidently there were pleasant relations with the President and his niece. "Miss Lane," said Ermina Merick, referring to one of her reception days, "is of the Anglo-Saxon beauty, she looked very pretty in her plain velvet basque and black silk. In her hair nothing but simple ornaments of jet. She is exceedingly affable in her manners and pleasant to all." It was on this occasion that "the President greeted us very cordially—was very jocose in his remarks. Gave Nette some good advice, told her to govern her husband *well*." A year or two later President Buchanan was to tell Mr. McCormick that his wife had always been one of his favorites—"Very good from *the president!*" wrote the pleased husband.

Some of the friendships lasted, notable among them that with Sara A. Pryor, who was to become a successful writer after she was seventy. Her husband, Roger A. Pryor, congressman before the Civil War, Confederate general, and in later years judge, was a friendly acquaintance of Mr. McCormick from earlier days. Years later Mrs. Pryor wrote to Mrs. McCormick—"the dearest friend I ever had": "It does not seem so long a time since I sat behind you in church, marked your beautiful face in the white bonnet trimmed

with thistles, and listened to my husband's information that you were the bride of his friend Cyrus McCormick! Well—the face changes but the heart never changes!”

In that first spring Mrs. McCormick was seriously ill. Ermina Merick took tender care of her for weeks and Mr. McCormick watched her anxiously. Finally late in June, when Mr. McCormick had to leave Washington on business, a health tour began for the convalescent. At Baltimore the couple parted for the first time since their marriage; and Miss Merick and Richard Fowler, youngest uncle of the cousins, went on with their charge to the Hygeia House, a vast hotel at Old Point Comfort, Virginia. And here began an itinerary that gave a panoramic view of summer resorts of the period, then in their heyday.

The cousins and their escort spent nearly a month at Old Point Comfort. They drove, gathered sea moss, went sightseeing, rested; took sea baths in bathing houses and once venturesomely enjoyed a “half bath” right out in the ocean with shoes and stockings off and the ladies’ petticoats tucked up. A great frolic. Events were kind to them: one day, while cannon fired, they saw the steamer *Jamestown* pass carrying the body of President Monroe to be re-interred at Richmond in commemoration of the centennial of his birth. (Did they recall hearing their Grandmother Fowler tell of entertaining him at her inn?) There was a brilliant dance to which passengers from an excursion boat in port added glamour, the French minister, Count de Sartiges, opening the ball with Miss Harriet Lane.

But all this was as nothing compared with the bride’s delight in her husband’s letters and his visit. “After looking anxiously,” she wrote, “and after having felt how severe the pang of disappointment for four or five mornings, I was much the happiest creature imaginable by the gift of a good, plump letter superscribed by a well-known hand—sealed with the initials ‘C H McC.’—I flew to my room, and with a palpitating heart—& eyes filling with tears I could not repress and read my first letter from my husband.” The letter, carefully kept through the years, must have been satisfying. The husband apologizes a little for writing a practical letter. “In writing my first letter to my dear *wife*, you may possibly expect something like an effort to write one that will read

well, or be a creditable specimen to be seen by a friend; but when you shall think of the variety of pressing demands upon me here, together with my practical method of treating and disposing of matters & things in general, I feel that you will not be much disappointed when I request you to excuse me at present for aiming at nothing more than to communicate to you very briefly and informally such thoughts or things as may be considered directly interesting to you." Among these "thoughts or things" were details concerning the lawsuit that had brought him to Chicago, concerning his church attendance (he wrote on a Sunday), news of family and friends. But above all came his concern for her health, coupled with an uneasy sense that he really ought to be with her.

Before July was half over Mr. McCormick came for a visit. "His voice awoke me from sleep, after dreaming all night of him——oh how *pleasant* to wake & find my brightest dreams so fully realized." They had two or three happy days together, counting on Ermina and Richard to "forgive their exclusiveness," before Mr. McCormick preceded his wife back to Washington.

The broiling midsummer month that they spent in the capital, while Mr. McCormick worked over legal details, was memorable, according to Ermina Merick's diary, for two outstanding events: the completion of the laying of the "Atlantic Telegraph" August 4—and the use of steam on canal boats celebrated in Rochester and Buffalo and by New York State generally.

On August 17 the cable transmitted the first message, Queen Victoria speaking to the President. But the McCormicks and Ermina Merick missed the "Great Atlantic Cable celebration" on September 1 because they were just leaving Saratoga Springs, though on the next day in New York they "had some glimpses of the great excitement." (Unfortunately the cable ceased working on September 4.)

In Saratoga they had done the usual things. They stayed at luxurious Congress Hall and drank the waters. They walked each morning in the park—"and the deer met us in our path." Probably Nettie McCormick knew from family reminiscences about her mother's visit to Saratoga Springs nearly thirty years before and imagined the loved figure in these same walks where she herself now strolled. But it was not until long years afterward that

she found among a relative's papers her aunt Jane Merick's account of the ambitious driving trip that included Saratoga. She took a copy and added it to her special treasures.

It tells how Anson and Maria Fowler, their daughter Jane, and their daughter-in-law Clarissa drove all the way from Jefferson County to their Fowler and Esselstyn kinfolk in eastern New York and central Connecticut. They stopped off here and there with relatives and friends or at an inn. Clarissa and Jane, apparently alone, spent more than two weeks at Saratoga Springs in a boarding house not far from Congress Hall—"from our window we have a fair prospect of Congress Spring and the company as they pass to and from the Spring . . ." They drank the waters diligently, took long walks, saw the sights, went to church, and observed with pain the worldliness of the visitors, including their over-great devotion to such diversions as nine-pins.

From New York Mr. McCormick conducted Nettie and Ermina to his sister Caroline Shields in Juniata County, Pennsylvania, where he left them while he went on to Chicago. After a few days' visit Mr. Shields, a country minister in Mexico, Pennsylvania escorted the young women on the difficult journey to Alum Springs in Mr. McCormick's native county, Rockbridge, Virginia. The last five miles were by coach—a continual ascent in lovely autumn scenery. At the springs they lived in a brick cottage of the hotel set in a circular valley surrounded by mountains. They had a room with a fireplace and chairs of old-fashioned splint. Almost the only guests in this resort, as the season was over, they were "under no restriction of conventionalities."

But there was a shadow over the young women's holiday—the failing health of their grandmother, Maria Fowler, in Clayton. Letters brought them word of her and "our aged Grandmother, as she is near her final home is made the subject of prayer." Finally the two returned to Washington and thence to Clayton. In suitable company they took the steamer from New York to Albany and reached Cape Vincent by train. "Only sixteen miles more to go," wrote Miss Merick on October 24, "but cold weather prevents going tonight," and the next day in spite of buffalo robes they "nearly perished with cold" on their stage ride.

They found Maria Fowler thin and pale, but peaceful in contemplation of her approaching death. "She cannot bear to have

Nettie out of her sight for a moment." Eldridge Fowler and Cyrus McCormick joined Nettie at Clayton, and Grandmother Fowler took comfort in the few days with her beloved children and in the assurance that their marriages were good. She had been happy when the two had "chosen Christians for companions"; now she had "the bright anticipation of a reunion above."

Nettie left with her husband, then as always driven by the gadfly of business. She was not to see her grandmother again, for Maria Fowler died on January 4, 1859.

By early December, 1858 the McCormicks had changed the doubtful comforts of Brown's Hotel in Washington for a furnished house. Known as the Maynard House, it stood on a corner of Lafayette Square, "which is one of the handsomest parks in this or any city, nearly opposite the President's . . . & this afternoon," the young wife wrote on December 8, "we took up our abode in our new home—our first home, and this evening we partook of food for the first time from our own table, and for the first time sat round our own fireside. May the fervent prayer which arose from grateful hearts as we brought the day to a close by offering our evening sacrifice, be realized by us a thousandfold. . . . The laying of the corner stone of a *Home* is not a matter for lightness or thoughtlessness. The structure requires care & watchfulness, if symmetry & beauty enter into its elements. . . . Time is the builder & *we* furnish him the materials. Oh that in ours he may use Love & Truth as the chief building material . . ."

Her family evidently watched with pride and confidence the young bride's elevation to the place of mistress of a city house. Her brother felt sure that her early experience in Clayton would sustain her. His wife somewhat romantically visioned her as a chatelaine—"with your bundle of keys tied to your apron-string consulting your china and sweetmeat closets, with all the importance due to your new estate and presume you preside over your new and elegant tea-set with becoming dignity . . ." Her aunt, Jane Merick, sent congratulations—"to every lady who possesses a sensitive mind there is a joy in one's own home that can not be expressed—" and gave her religious instruction in a wife's duties.

All during the month Mrs. McCormick sorrowed over her grandmother's approaching death, recalling the love Maria Fowler had showered on the orphan children, meditating on her fine

Christian character, picturing the final visit at her bedside. On the night of January 7 after Mrs. McCormick had retired her husband came in with the sad words, "Nettie, your Grandma is no more." In the rush of her grief Nettie was grateful for "a strong arm to lean upon—a tender, sympathizing heart to *feel* with me in my sorrow weep when I weep—"

By February Ermina Merick was again with the McCormicks, this time accompanied by her brother Melzar. And the round of calls, sightseeing, visiting art galleries and the Capitol began again. Interesting names dot the record. Mr. and Mrs. Stephen A. Douglas called. They heard Fanny Kemble read *Hamlet*. There was opera too—Marietta Piccolomini (the Italian singer with charming personality and indifferent voice so long forgotten) in *Don Pasquale*. There was the funeral of Postmaster General Aaron V. Brown in the East Room of the Executive Mansion. There were parties, including the President's levee and the brilliant entertainment given at Willard's Hotel to Lord Napier, the British Ambassador, and Lady Napier. The McCormick group stayed until the late hour of two o'clock, and Miss Merick's account indicates that they were impressed:

"The large dining hall was festooned with the American and English flags. The stars and stripes with the red cross of England being entwined together. On the wall opposite the Napier arms were beautifully traced on a very large scale the two knights that were supporters being the size of life. Over the two flags was a large device very handsomely executed containing the shields of Great Britain and the United States happily blended together, with the rose, shamrock, and thistle on the former, and ornamented with the Indian Cornstalk and leaves for the latter.

"The whole scene was a very brilliant one, there was a large collection of beautiful women and superb and costly toilets, a large number of distinguished persons. . . . The table was said to be complete in every respect. Immediately in front of Lady N. stood a pyramid of confectionery six feet high with appropriate devices, ornamented at the top with the figure of Britannia; and another similar ornament in a different part of the table, emblematical of the United States.

"There were fourteen hundred persons present."

And then there was Nettie's first party. On the 25th of Febru-

ary Ermina wrote: "This morning Nettie decided upon giving a party. Have been very busy most of the day in writing." She spent the next day too in writing invitations, and Nettie went out distributing them as custom required. "The etiquette of Washington is so very different from that in any other city one feels almost bewildered. This is Nettie's first experiment in party giving and we find there are many things to be learned." The party was on March first and all that we know of it, except for a little packet of regrets, is in Ermina Merick's paragraph:

"Quite early we had everything in readiness. About four P.M. Lord Napier called, giving Lady Napier's regret. We had a very agreeable call from him, he seems very social in his feelings. About half past nine the guests commenced to assemble. We had a band of seven who discoursed operatic music which added very much to the evening's entertainment. The table was also very fine. We had just enough here to give ample room for each one to move about at their pleasure. All seemed to enjoy themselves, and it is pronounced a *decided success. Nettie's first party.*"

But what was on that "table"? And what did the hostess wear? The diarist exasperatingly says not a word. In the absence of definite information one visualizes Mrs. McCormick as Healy painted her in 1861: in a heavy ivory satin over spreading hoops.

It says something about Nettie McCormick that in the atmosphere of the fifties she gave a party only two and a half months before her first child was born. Something of independence of mind, even allowing for the disguising aid of hoops, and certainly something of vitality and health. The child born in the Maynard House early in the morning of May 16 was a son—"a nice looking baby and very large." He was named Cyrus for his father and Rice for Dr. Nathan Rice, his parents' friend who married them. (When he was about thirteen or fourteen he was to drop the Rice and take his father's name in full.) "Mr. McCormick," wrote Miss Merick, who was in charge of the household, "is delighted with his heir, whom he gives the title of '*Young Reaper.*'"

In the latter part of July Mr. McCormick took his wife and his baby son to Walnut Grove, his old home in Rockbridge County, Virginia, for their first visit. Years later Mrs. McCormick recalled it in writing to a Virginia friend: "The day after arriving there being Sunday," she said, "together we attended Mt. Carmel

Church, and the incidents of that day, I can never forget. Its value was in the impression on a young mind made by things I had heard so much about." Her husband was a charter member of Mt. Carmel—one of thirty-eight persons who came from neighboring churches to organize Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Meeting House on the road north of Steele's Tavern. At the time of that visit all of Mr. McCormick's brothers and sisters had left the Valley of Virginia and both of his parents were dead; but there were McCormick relatives in the neighborhood and many old friends. Mrs. McCormick must have seen with rapt interest all the special places of her husband's history—the fine old brick house, the blacksmith shop where his invention was born, the field near Steele's Tavern where the reaper was first tested, Old Providence Church and graveyard where his parents were buried, New Providence Church where he had led the singing—all vivid to her, no doubt, from Mr. McCormick's descriptions.

A week after Cyrus the second was born Mr. McCormick left for Indianapolis, feeling perfectly safe in trusting his wife to the helpful care of Miss Merick and the young mother's brother.

Mr. McCormick's business in Indianapolis was to take action that years later would result in giving that young wife the loving title, "Mother of the Seminary." He went to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church with a proposal to establish in Chicago a school for the training of prospective ministers throughout the great new Northwest in Old School Presbyterian doctrines. "Just show him a cause and see how he fights," his wife once said. And this, he believed, was a means of furthering the causes he cherished—orthodox Presbyterian doctrine in general and in particular the adherence of his church to a principle of no interference in "politics," above all in the burning question of slavery. His proposal was to endow, with \$100,000 for four professorships, a seminary already nominally existing, on condition of its transfer to Chicago and from control of seven synods (which were growing stronger in anti-slavery attitudes) to that of the General Assembly. An important detail of his plan was that the professors should be preachers, who would occupy Chicago pulpits, and contributors to the Presbyterian religious press. In this way the Seminary would spread the doctrines that were his "cause" throughout this great

opening region which he believed would determine the fate of the Union.

The school that he sought to re-found had come into being after the manner of frontier schools of that time. In the wilderness along the Ohio River at Hanover, Indiana a pioneer Presbyterian minister, John Finley Crowe, had opened a grammar school with six pupils in a log cabin. Out of this beginning and heroic effort evolved both Hanover College and the Indiana Theological Seminary. When at the end of ten gallant hard years funds were offered to the Seminary if it would move to New Albany, Indiana, it accepted. And the name became the New Albany Theological Seminary. The early period there was smooth enough, but presently the sectional strife of the times began to tell: a rival seminary was set up at Danville, Kentucky and again a removal was broached. The school had meantime received bequests and \$75,000 was offered for location in Hyde Park, south of Chicago. This failed to go through, but the effort to find a new home for the now all but abandoned seminary continued. Decision was to be made at the Assembly: Chicago or Indianapolis?

Into the balance Mr. McCormick cast a determining weight: his conditional offer of \$100,000 endowment. The debate was spirited, but the offer won. So Mr. McCormick took back to his little family a new responsibility.

How sharply all the incidents of this new absorption of her husband's were impressed on Nettie McCormick's mind is shown by the phrasing of a letter to her sons announcing a gift to this Seminary fifty years later. ". . . And now, therefore, in commemoration of the year 1859, and the scenes themselves, which I recall so vividly, when your father was warmly enthusiastic over establishing the Seminary in Chicago . . ."

Early in September of 1859 the McCormicks came back to Chicago. They spent some weeks in the Richmond House, a well-appointed hotel, opened only in 1857 on the northwest corner of Michigan Avenue and South Water Street. Their "pleasant parlor" overlooked Michigan Avenue and the Lake—its shoreline much farther in then than now.

Shortly after their arrival Mrs. McCormick attended the United States Fair, an annual event since 1851 held under the auspices of

the National Agricultural Society. The "fair grounds" fronting the Lake were on open land along Cottage Grove Avenue in the southern part of Chicago. In the only reference to the Fair found among Mrs. McCormick's papers, she says:

"There were beautiful & fleet horses of all colors & descriptions, cattle that would have inclined almost any one to the pursuit of farming & raising stock &c, machinery that would challenge the admiration of the most skillful inventor for ingenuity of design & beauty of action; implements of labor in every department of toil; a gallery of fine art, painting, photographs, the most beautiful specimens of writing from various commercial colleges &c.

"A beautiful Floral Hall, decorated with a Fountain, Flora's Grotto &c, very beautiful, &c. The last day I stayed to witness a trial of speed between twelve or fourteen horses."

She does not refer to her husband's machinery, but no doubt she kept admiring eyes on his combined reaper and mower, which was on exhibition though not competing. Perhaps this was the first of the many exhibitions she attended in various cities where Mr. McCormick's interests were involved.

Of course the McCormicks were presently in close and interested touch with the young Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the North-West (as the General Assembly had christened it). Classes began in September with fourteen students in a former hotel building a little south of the present-day Loop. The four professors were all at their posts. Dr. Nathan L. Rice was the McCormicks' pastor and close friend—a man of rare ability and of opinions in this troubled period that were congenial to Mr. McCormick. Dr. Willis L. Lord's views were not congenial and in the late sixties he and Mr. McCormick were to have a resounding clash. The gentle Dr. LeRoy J. Halsey was to go through literal fire and figurative flood with the Seminary and to die in harness after thirty-seven years of faithful service. A detailed, careful *History of the Seminary* (to which this narrative is much indebted) is his permanent memorial. Dr. William M. Scott lived next door to the house that the McCormicks were soon to occupy on Dearborn Street—a little distance above Chicago Avenue.

All four were inaugurated in the North Presbyterian Church on two successive days in late October of 1859 and the McCor-

micks were present. "These addresses were fine, and *a real treat*, I assure you," Mrs. McCormick wrote. Mr. McCormick's photograph was included with those of the professors in a thin volume that contained the four addresses. And a chair was named for him, "The Cyrus H. McCormick Professorship of Theology."

Chapter 6

IN AND OUT OF CHICAGO

THE McCormicks' first Chicago house at 230 Dearborn Street stood in a pleasant tree-lined row of red brick houses—in one of those agreeable areas that sometimes won for the Chicago of this period the name of "The Garden City." It was a single house of three stories and basement with a high stoop and a railing up to the front door. It had front and back parlors, a library, a basement dining room, and five bedrooms. As for the furnishings Miss Merick wrote that the parlor was in green and gold "and a perfect correspondence throughout," and Mrs. McCormick: "No pains have been spared to make it complete in everything which contributes to the happiness of home. My dear husband's taste in furnishings is superior to that of any gentleman I ever saw. A harmony runs through every room. Not his alone; we were always united in our judgment of articles. He commends my taste also."

"Housekeeping goes well," she wrote early in 1860. "I do want to learn to be a good housekeeper & I intend to be one. My husband & I agree exactly in this matter. He thinks there is nothing so beautiful as a well regulated family."

The heart of the new home was of course the baby Cyrus, nearly seven months old when they moved in. His mother did not mention him in her journal (which has long gaps) until he had cut his first two teeth. But from then on she sang the praises and exploited the achievements of her plump, cherubic son.

On his first Christmas—a Sunday—the child in christening dress and blue sash was baptized Cyrus Rice by his parents' friend Dr. Rice in the North Presbyterian Church. This was in the second building, a drab colored frame structure, where the baby's mother

had sung before her marriage. Inside, the walls were papered with faded blue in panels, and back of the pulpit was a perspective colonnade with paper tiling and paper columns. "The service was a very solemn one. . . ." the mother wrote. "Cyrus behaved like a man. His father took him in his arms to the altar; while the service was going on he looked about on the congregation patting his little hand on his father's arm. When the water was sprinkled on his head & face he remained perfectly still, not a muscle moved save he looked into the Dr.'s face as much as to say, 'What does that mean?'"

Prosperity was evidenced by the size of the household—at least a cook, a nurse, and a coachman to accompany a carriage with two horses.

Through the reminiscent eyes of a neighbor it was possible to get a glimpse—nearly seventy-five years later—of the life that went on in the house. The neighbor was Cecilia DeWolf, a girl of twelve then, whose parents lived next door but one to the McCormicks. On hot summer nights, Cecilia DeWolf Erskine recalled, Mrs. McCormick would often sit on the DeWolf steps, talking with the child's mother. Sometimes after Cecilia was supposed to be in bed, she would creep downstairs in her nightgown and listen in suppressed admiration to their conversation—in those stirring days of 1860. Perhaps among other things they talked about the exciting nomination in May of Abraham Lincoln—interesting, no doubt, but not thrilling, to the McCormicks.

It was Cecilia's pleasure to sit in a darkened bedroom beside the crib of baby Cyrus and watch his big brown eyes open as he wakened. And it was her proud privilege to take this future head of the International Harvester Company for an airing. One day she wheeled his carriage to the east past the grove of trees on Rush Street where the McCormick family mansion was to stand to the door of Isaac N. Arnold—a pleasant house in a great garden along what is now North Michigan Avenue. The Arnolds were away, but the friendly cook was there, and "Telie" landed her passenger at the kitchen basement steps. Over-estimating her strength, she lifted the heavy baby and started down, tripped, fell—and baby and Telie, scared and bumped, both wept. The cook washed their faces and applied brown paper plasters. Then, feeling all was

over, Telie took little Cyrus home and told the sad story. Whereupon the young mother, finding the damage slight, kissed baby and Telie and spoke kindly about "next time."

This little girl, grown old, had other recollections: of Sunday night supper where Mr. McCormick, whom she feared, demanded if she would have "apple-sass," and of driving with Mrs. McCormick to the studio of G. P. A. Healy on Lake Street when she sat for her portrait. She recalled how eagerly Mrs. McCormick and the artist, who had come from France to Chicago to improve his fortunes, talked together. The painting that resulted—one of the few Healy portraits of Chicagoans to survive the Fire—is a large canvas showing Mrs. McCormick's figure at nearly full length, in a heavy ivory satin over hoops, with deep straight décolletage. Her hair is smoothly parted in the middle and her bearing dignified and gracious. The characteristic of her mouth—the sweet, firm lips tucked in at the corners—is clear. But her loveliness is not so marked as in the portrait made by Cabanel in Paris a few years later.

Her life must have been patterned much like that of other intelligent young wives and mothers with the addition, even thus early, of an unusual absorption in all of her husband's affairs. She had her household, her child, her church. She had the interests of her own relatives and of her husband's many relatives. She had a growing circle of acquaintances and friends. Evidently Mr. McCormick's thought of entering heartily into Chicago society was carried out. For as early as February 2, 1860 the newcomers to Dearborn Street had a party. In a period when there was comparatively little opportunity for public entertainment, giving people pleasure by entertaining them at home was a responsibility to be taken seriously. The McCormicks so took it, and with satisfaction. "It was a success," the hostess wrote. "The *company*, the *supper*, the *music* did credit to any parlor or any place. The *élite* and the talented of Chicago were among our guests, and the entertainment was, *we think, a fine one* A friend said the finest table he ever saw in Chicago. We have every reason to be delighted."

The part of Mr. McCormick's concerns that had to do with patents took him during many months to and from Washington on a sort of grand scale commuting. And sometimes his wife was with him. During much of 1861 Eldridge and Mary Fowler, with their

little son Melzar, lived—whether the McCormicks were present or absent—in the house on Dearborn Street. Eldridge, not yet established in business, was looking after some matters for Mr. McCormick. Mary Fowler had in her care not only the house but for a time young Cyrus; but presently his parents took him to live with them at Brown's Hotel in Washington. From this base Mr. McCormick pressed in vain for renewal of his 1847 patent.

A long Washington interval in 1861 covered the inauguration of President Lincoln. In her journal Mrs. McCormick mentioned the current belief that the event would not take place, and only years afterward wrote that she had attended—"a sleety, raw cold day it was, that 4th of March."

One hopes retroactively that she was in a carriage, for it was only two months later that her second baby was born. Mary Fowler had begun to worry as early as February about the long tiresome journey that lay between sister Nettie and home. But Mrs. McCormick's vitality was equal to the strain of the two-night trip, and in May her daughter, Mary Virginia, arrived. Mr. McCormick, who had been on a flying visit home, appears to have left a few hours before the event. His letters show his constant tender concern for the "fond & dear wife of his bosom" and their "beautiful, sweet little dependents, given by God."

As for Mr. McCormick's Chicago affairs they were as always varied, his conduct of them was as always vigorous; and his wife, then and thereafter, was involved in them. These included in the early sixties the re-creation of a theological seminary, publishing activities, and church interests. All, of course, in addition to the direction of the growing reaper business in its good brick building on the Chicago River near the Rush Street bridge.

His publishing activities were both secular and religious. When Dr. Rice came to the North Church, he brought with him at Mr. McCormick's expense the *Presbyterian Expositor* to fight for the principles of Old School Presbyterianism and conservative Democracy. In these institutions—the Democratic party and the Presbyterian Church—Mr. McCormick believed as bulwarks of the nation. But after the manner of propaganda papers the *Expositor* was a heavy expense, and it was discontinued within two years.

During 1860 Mr. McCormick bought both the *Chicago Herald* and the *Chicago Daily Times*, which then represented different

Democratic factions, and combined them as the *Daily Chicago Times*. His purpose was to use this agency to advocate a compromise course in the sharp controversies of these prewar days. But within a year he had sold it to Wilbur F. Storey and two months earlier had announced that he had turned over his interests to his brother-in-law, Eldridge M. Fowler.

Southerner by birth, Northerner by adoption, Mr. McCormick's course in these days was difficult and he did not escape epithets inspired by the hot enmities of the time. His biographer, Mr. William T. Hutchinson, defines his attitude: "As a Jeffersonian he was anti-slavery in principle, but he held that the Constitution sanctioned human bondage and that the Union should not be endangered by agitating the issue of immediate emancipation."¹ He believed that the uncompromising attitude of the Abolitionists was unwise and that without it a program of gradual emancipation would have been carried out by the South. He did not, however, "champion slavery except in the sense that he believed immediate emancipation by federal action without compensation would be an invasion of States' rights and individual rights, and a remedy worse than the disease."² Considering secession unconstitutional and wrong, he held that the people, North and South, would speak for union if allowed to speak, though it might be union at the cost of continuing slavery in the South.

With these ideas strongly in mind, Mr. McCormick devoted his energies to propaganda for peace conferences. These efforts he continued even after the beginning of the War and his own forthright declaration of allegiance to the United States.

Mrs. McCormick's journals of the period reveal the agonized interest with which she followed the course of events. She was torn with grief over the war between brothers, stressing the horror of it, deeply moved by her country's division and by the loss of its high place in the world. "I have always had a pride of feeling," she wrote, "when thinking of our country—great & glorious indeed a short time ago, but now mortification has taken its place

¹ William T. Hutchinson, *Cyrus Hall McCormick*, Vol. II (New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1935), pp. 38 and 39. Copyright, 1935, D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc. and reprinted by permission of Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

² *Ibid.*

terror has followed upon tranquillity. . . . Oh God spare our country."

Though naturally Mrs. McCormick identified herself with the North, her anguished concern was for the nation as a whole. With her husband, she disapproved of secession (on February 22, 1861 she wrote of movements in Washington streets of troops "bearing the Stars & Stripes—now so *much in jeopardy* and already *disowned & dishonored* by eight states"), but she did not comment on the issues of the war, scarcely mentioning slavery. "We have been both a covetous & a spendthrift nation," she wrote, "and God is punishing us."

Of her husband's "errand-of-peace" she wrote late in 1864: "He meets with encouragement from many prominent gentlemen, but all are too fainthearted to stand for a settlement of our difficulties."

Mrs. McCormick was Northern, of a family every line of which was no doubt committed to the Northern point of view. Her Spicer kinfolk included Abolitionists who were organizers of the underground railway. The Merick household, which helped mold her youth, was clearly Whig. She had married a stout Democrat, born and reared in the South, who while loyal to the Government was trying energetically to stop the war. The young wife, only thirty when the war ended, had adopted her husband's interests wholeheartedly, and it is fairly evident that his views influenced her. Besides, loyalty to him together with her own marked capacity for sympathy would have kept her on a quiet course harmonious with his.

Meantime, regardless of any ideas of either, the reaper was steadily at work on the Union side releasing men particularly of the prairie states from the production of food to the waging of war.

With probably the same general motive that inspired his publishing and peace activities, Mr. McCormick entered politics in 1860. In the early winter he ran for the Democratic nomination for mayor. He lost, but his successful opponent was defeated in the election by the Republican candidate, "Long John" Wentworth. Mrs. McCormick believed that the people wanted her husband but that the "*politicians . . . spoiled it all.*" "However we, *personally* congratulate ourselves," she added, "on our escape from a *great* bore."

The offices of governor, congressman, senator, vice president, and ambassador, each in turn were to have some appeal for Mr. McCormick. He never held elective office, however, though he shared actively in Democratic party work—with money as well as time. His wife did not favor his political ambitions, rather unflatteringly taking the view that his money was what counted most with the politicians.

There were vacation intervals—one year Mr. and Mrs. McCormick spent a time in the early autumn at that “busy mart of fashion,” as Mary Fowler called it, Newport. “I . . . almost envied you a stroll upon the breezy cliffs of Newport, and a walk by the ‘sounding sea.’” The next summer included a stay at Avon Springs, New York, known to both, since there in his bachelor days Mr. McCormick had drunk the waters and Nettie Fowler had more than once visited this town while she was in school at near-by Lima. Both had at least slight sentimental associations with the place.

Through a strange set of circumstances it is possible to get a fair impression of the dress and ornaments worn by Mrs. McCormick in the early sixties. To the testimony supplied by a few photographs may be added that brought out in Mr. McCormick’s “lost baggage case.”

It happened that in March, 1862 Mr. and Mrs. McCormick, Miss Merick, two servants, and the two children on their way from Washington to Chicago spent a few days in Philadelphia. When they went to the Pennsylvania Central Railroad station to complete their journey, Mr. McCormick, seeing to tickets and checks after the party’s nine trunks had been loaded on board, learned of \$8.70 excess baggage charges. Considering this an unwarranted overcharge, Mr. McCormick said so and closed the altercation by ordering the nine trunks off the train. Unhappily, the station officials pronounced it too late; unhappily for every one concerned; since, with what seemed a malicious operation of coincidence, the station at Chicago was struck by lightning and burned before the trunks could be removed.

After the war Mr. McCormick brought suit, and with characteristic persistency fought the case through court after court, now winning, now losing. Final settlement, in his favor, came after

his death in 1884; and the amount of the award, \$18,000, was less than the amount he had spent in those years on counsel fees.

In at least one of the several hearings a full list is published of Mrs. McCormick's gowns, accessories, and jewels. More than forty separate dresses, wraps, waists, mantles, bonnets, and head-dresses were described briefly by their owner, who was able—also characteristically—to produce many of the bills to back her claims. Looking down that list one gains charming impressions of Mr. McCormick's young wife in the clothing and ornaments he had bought to adorn her beauty. With her dark hair and eyes, her clear rosy complexion, her slender tallness, she must have been lovely in a rich, pearl-colored silk, with a deep flounce and white silk fringe, or in a fine grenadine in "small bouquet pattern," with green accents; and striking in a black and crimson plaid silk, worn with crimson and black chenille net headdress. No one color prevailed in this wardrobe: there were black silk and velvet, brown Irish poplin, white Swiss muslin, a blue and a purple organdy, a stone-colored grenadine, a white nainsook "breakfast dress," with French embroidery. An evening dress pattern destined never to be made up, was of white Chene silk, with a wreath of roses and fine thread lace. Perhaps with it Nettie McCormick would have carried her pearl fan, "inlaid with silver, richly carved."

Among the bonnets and headdresses that fed the flames were a green dress bonnet, a white velvet with ostrich feather and lace, headdresses of green silk velvet, of crimson velvet, and black. The laces mentioned forecast the taste and interest of one who was to become a connoisseur of laces. In wraps, there were a black velvet cloak, a black silk mantilla "with bertha of Guipure lace," and shawls of Brussels black thread, of fabrics from Tibet and from India.

The list of lost jewelry included the bridegroom's wedding presents, already mentioned, and other pieces. An Etruscan necklace set with carbuncles and pearls was restored to Mrs. McCormick in a trunk that escaped the fire.

To those who knew Mrs. McCormick only after her husband's death, this colorful inventory must be hard to credit. For a protracted period she wore heavy crape, in the manner of the eighties, never returning to colors more conspicuous than mauve and gray.

And the jewelry she wore was limited to perhaps a fine ring and a pin.

She was soon to have a chance to replenish her fire-reduced wardrobe at fashion headquarters abroad. For in the summer of 1862 the McCormicks went to England and the Continent.

The motive for the trip was promotion of the reaper business abroad and, in particular, exhibition of the reaper at the International Exhibition of Arts and Manufactures in London. In deciding to go Mr. McCormick was no doubt influenced too by disheartenment over the war situation.

With whatever mingling of motives and emotions, the family sailed for Liverpool on the S. S. *Scotia* July 16, 1862, about two months after Leander McCormick and his family and other representatives of the firm had sailed with the same general purpose. Besides the two little children and a servant, Mr. and Mrs. McCormick took along his eldest niece, sixteen-year-old Mary Caroline Adams. Miss Adams had been snatched from a young ladies' seminary in Chicago to prepare on short notice for the thrilling experience of a six months' trip abroad as "company" for her young aunt.

Mrs. McCormick's relatives shared with interest in her preparations for her first trip abroad. Her aunt Jane Merick gave her anxious advice to wear "double gowns" on the cold crossing, and Ermina Merick added pink and blue hoods and sacks for little Mary and a remedy for seasickness for the adults—brandy and water, carbonate of soda, and tartaric acid.

The party, thus prepared, spent ten days on the *Scotia*, a fine new ship, provided with every comfort. But despite Miss Merick's efforts, Mrs. McCormick was "more or less seasick & miserable all the way over," and looked forward eagerly to landing.

Arriving in London on a Saturday night, the party went to Fenton's Hotel in St. James' Street—a short street between Piccadilly and Pall Mall.

The next day Mr. McCormick got breakfast over early and gave his wife her first glimpse of London from a cab that carried them across the river to the Tabernacle to hear the preaching of Charles H. Spurgeon, then at the height of his powers. Mrs. McCormick described that experience:

"When we arrived at the place I saw a vast crowd of persons waiting at the doors as though there was no admittance. At home every body went into the church as fast as they came. Now the doors open & what a crush. We got into the current, the only chance of getting in at all, and now the surging toward the doors *becomes fearful*. . . . I thought I should be crushed to death & only but for Mr. McC's strong arm I think I should have been hurt—after getting inside the rush for seats is fearful. We got a seat in the gallery—and what a scene met my eyes. I was so overwhelmed that tears would come in spite of me—here was a vast edifice, lofty & broad—filled to overflowing with immortal beings. This vast assemblage, the errand on which they came, the full chorus of praise as it were from this sea of human beings, the solemn & unusually impressive voice of the minister all combined to make the scene indellible on my memory. . . . There are two galleries running all round the building of light & airy architecture & the stand where Mr. Spurgeon preaches—for it is not a pulpit—is on the first gallery & here he speaks, without notes; and upon his words his audience hang seemingly enchanted. This sermon impressed me, though at first I was somewhat disappointed in him. The style was earnest, quite appealing to & enlisting the feelings, though addressed to the reason. His eloquence at times was quite equal to his fame."

It was a good start for Mrs. McCormick on a long course of sightseeing—in art galleries, museums, and at scenes of historical interest. Her husband's business interests, taking him in haste from city to city, left him little time for such pursuits even if he had been so inclined. Naturally the children were sightseers too. The earliest recollection of his mother that her eldest son could summon in the 1930's was that of being taken home to her, all wet and dripping from an accidental immersion in a fishpond in the great Crystal Palace on Sydenham Hill.

It was in the Crystal Palace that the Exposition was held—a great structure of metal and glass extending over twenty-four acres of ground in South Kensington. The McCormick exhibit was a de luxe specimen of self-rake reaper, its platform covered with "planished copper," its beautifully grained ash woodwork polished and decorated. Mounted on a low platform against the prescribed

maroon background, it must have been a brave sight. One readily imagines Mrs. McCormick's pride in it as she led the future head of the company by his small hand to inspect it.

When the time came for bestowal of awards, the McCormick reaper received a medal. Other awards in generous number came to the machines that had been prepared for other exhibitions and for field trials during this season and the next—in England and Scotland and in half a dozen European states. Mrs. McCormick kept in close touch with her husband's activities; he told her what was going on and when absent sent her commissions to write, to telegraph, to talk with agents, to dispatch wanted machine parts by courier. In this period Mr. McCormick was working intensively (his wife wrote in her journal), on "an important improvement for tangled grain—lengthening the divider and extending the rake head to reach the straggling grain," and there were many field tests. Mrs. McCormick accompanied him on some of his trips to put the reaper into competitions. Once, wishing to see the reaper in a critical test in rye, she took young Cyrus and drove out to the field, but finding there were "few, if any ladies present" she remained in her carriage.

In the fall of 1862 she was with Mr. McCormick in Scotland on a combination business and sightseeing trip that in a late year of her life she referred to as a "honeymoon"—the honeymoon that business had prevented in 1858. And for that matter, business made this a "honeymoon" of brief intervals, for Mr. McCormick was busy here and there concerning the reaper. Meantime his wife, sometimes with Mrs. Leander McCormick, went sightseeing in Edinburgh, the Trossachs, Stirling, Melrose ("Melrose!" she wrote), Ayr, and other places.

Back in London, they managed some degree of family life in the hotel on St. James' Street. At the close of 1862 Mrs. McCormick summed up the year's progress of her two children: "Cyrus has progressed rapidly—in intelligence in health & strength & sweetness & in obedience. Mary is talking everything & is a great strong girl running every where, climbing up on all the chairs & trying to do everything any body else does—a great mimic—obedient too, with one of the clearest perceptions of right & wrong. . . . Affectionate too, she *can't* hold out against reproof but almost instantly yields & puts up her sweet mouth for the kiss & reconcilia-

tion. . . . Her tone & gesture when she reproves Cyrus with such *mock* gravity, with uplifted finger & assumed authority she says 'Tywah, oh Tywah!' or, 'why, Tywah' are all interesting to those whose gift she is. . . ."

When it became clear that the McCormicks' stay was to last far beyond the intended six months, young Mary Adams was sent to a finishing school in Geneva. Her aunt returned from Brighton (where she and the children had enjoyed the sea air for several weeks) to fit her for school and afterward, with her husband, visited Geneva to make sure of Mary's instruction in French, dancing, piano. It was an experience that gave the young lady considerable edge on her Chicago friends when, complete with hoops, she returned to the Mid-West. Few Chicago girls at that time beside Julia Newberry and her sister and Mary Adams were "finished" in the European way. In these two glorious years Mary Adams enjoyed not only school in Switzerland, but happy times in London and Paris, with the young aunt whose society in itself was thrilling. Among other memories she handed down to her children a picture of herself hanging over the stairs at the American Ministry in London with a daughter of Charles Francis Adams when parties were being given. The figure of the Empress Eugénie made much of the magic of Paris—especially to this young girl whose hair was the same Titian red as Eugénie's. She recalled the rage for dyeing hair to that shade, and how in one shop they offered to make Nettie McCormick's dark locks as bright as her niece's.

The trip to Geneva gave Mrs. McCormick her first glimpse of Switzerland and she eagerly prolonged it a little after Mr. McCormick left—but not as long as she wished, for business controlled her too. She joined her husband at other points and he escorted her to Travemünde on the north coast of Germany, where she spent a month in "this quiet nook of creation," taking the baths and building up strength for the coming of another child in the fall. When she felt it was safe, she undertook an itinerary that included Berlin, Heidelberg, Frankfurt am Main, Dresden. She reassured her husband, who had returned to Scotland on business, that she was exercising care, avoiding fatigue as she visited galleries, museums, castles, palaces. No doubt she was careful; but she was also determined, and this was something she longed to do. Perhaps not

many women in her situation, with two little children along, even with the aid of a faithful maid would, for instance, have got off a train at half past three in the morning in order to visit Heidelberg Castle.

But all was well. On October 26 of that year another McCormick son, Robert Fowler, was born. He began his brief life in a hotel in Upper Norwood a few days apparently after his parents' arrival from Tunbridge Wells. That winter the family continued to live in the Upper Norwood hotel. They were evidently comfortable, for Eldridge Fowler wrote:

"We see that you are pleasantly located (as pleasantly as you can be away from home), and quite as much by yourself, as though you were in your own house and not boarding; that you are living almost a country life, and are yet in the midst of a multitude; it is good for you and the children that you can breathe the fresh air. . . ."

In June of 1864 Mr. McCormick came back to run for Congress against "Long John" Wentworth. He intended to return to England late in July, but his political situation and his business held him in the United States. His wife and family, however, remained in London until early in November, living in a house in St. John's Wood, near Regent's Park. There Mrs. McCormick led an agreeable life, with the three children. "I am delighted to find," wrote a friend of her St. Lawrence days, "you are *a lady* that can look after yourself so well in your husband's absence."

Chapter 7

SOJOURN IN NEW YORK

IT IS late in 1864 now, and the scene is New York City, still a city of houses, with skyline so low that six stories are sensational.

Mrs. McCormick, coming home unseasonably in mid-November from England, could hardly have known as she looked at the familiar outlines that this was to be her home for the next seven years. Even her husband, hurrying on from Chicago to join her and the three children in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, probably would have scouted the thought.

But, still counting Chicago their residence, they nevertheless stayed in New York. Mr. McCormick's candidacy for Congress having, not unexpectedly, failed, no political obligation drew him back. He had just signed a new contract with his brothers. His patent matters were more easily handled from New York, where his lawyers lived, than from Chicago, and the many enterprises—mines and railroads and land companies—in which he was now investing his surplus profits centered there too. Perhaps there were additional reasons in the unsatisfactory state of his favorite philanthropy, the Seminary of the North-West, and in consideration of the sharper criticism likely to be directed against him in his Chicago home than in New York for the breadth of his views on the war. "Chicago, while a great city, and with a great future before it," he wrote, "has lost much of its interest for me by means of the radical rule there."

The dark summer of 1864 was past, with its depressing defeats for the North, the growing insistence on peace, the heightened unpopularity of President Lincoln. Horace Greeley, agreeing with those Republicans who had wished to call a new convention at Cincinnati to name another candidate, had announced that Lincoln was beaten. But Northern victories on land and sea had changed

all that. The war clearly was not a failure, as the Chicago convention of Democrats had proclaimed it, and McClellan had carried only 21 electoral votes against Lincoln's 212. Mr. McCormick, however, did not yet foresee a Northern victory as the way to union and continued his efforts for peace through negotiation designed to restore union, with slavery if necessary. Just before his wife's return from Europe he wrote a long letter, published in both Chicago and Washington, which urged that the Democratic party call a national convention to find ways of ending the war.

The family's residential range was lower Fifth Avenue. At first they lived in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, at Twenty-third Street, one of New York's exceptional six story buildings then only a few years old. They occupied a comfortable suite on the second floor—chosen perhaps to avoid stairs, for the hotel had not yet achieved the elevator that was presently to make it a pioneer.

But it was an error, Mrs. McCormick was to say later, to live there, for she held hotel life responsible for her children's illness. Scarlet fever struck at all three during the first winter and little Robert died before he had finished his fifteenth month. His mother, writing of him a month later, said: "He was as companionable as a child two or three years old—neither in looks or acts was he infantile. Every one remarked that he was a child of unusual promise. . . . Thus you will see how fair a flower has withered in our garden—or I ought to say has been transplanted to a more genial soil." A box containing a few dried flowers, a bit of the lining of his rosewood casket, a fragment of the white velvet trimming of his burial dress, and yellowed clippings of tender verse about beloved babes, remained among the mother's treasures throughout the years of her long life. And the entry in her journal on the day of his death—for no eyes but her own—preserved a record of anguish.

The family was still in the hotel when at last the war ended, still there fifteen days later when the long, solemn procession following President Lincoln's body passed through the streets. But their available correspondence and her journal are silent on these days.

From the Fifth Avenue Hotel the McCormicks moved into a rented house on the Avenue. But presently they bought (for some \$80,000) a house at No. 40 Fifth Avenue just north of the Church

of the Ascension, added several thousands for part of the furnishings, brought some things on from Chicago, supplied others; and late in 1866 the family moved in. It was a fine four-story house, the first floor including a dining room with a sunny bay window, where the children recited their Latin lessons to a tutor. Fragmentary memories and gleanings from papers reveal paintings, marbles, bronzes, and—choice treasure—a marble bust of Mrs. McCormick by Erastus Dow Palmer which had been shown at the Artists' Fund Exhibition. These survived to grace the Chicago mansion. So did a large library of richly bound books, selected with expert aid.

This house was in a charming residential region. Houses had gardens. There were trees; there was space. Cyrus the second always remembered peacocks in grounds between Fifth and Sixth Avenues on Fourteenth Street. As Mrs. McCormick saw it, the house was in "a central position of the city, which we think is an advantage, though the tide of living seems to set in the direction of the northern part of the city." But there were as yet no elevated roads to carry the population far northward. Columbia College was on Madison Avenue at Forty-ninth Street, Grand Central Station was a little way in the future, the Croton Reservoir stood where much later the Public Library was to stand behind its lions. And St. Patrick's Cathedral was a site and a cornerstone. Traffic was beginning to crowd the streets—not very well paved nor very clean streets; but it was horse-drawn traffic, whether of carriages or of street cars. Trees lined avenues as well as cross streets. Under the lavish spending program of the corrupt Tweed regime Broadway was widened and carried northward from Central Park along the line of the old Bloomingdale Road. And Manhattan stood alone, united to Brooklyn and New Jersey by nothing more definite than ferry lines.

There were again three children in the McCormick family when it moved into its Fifth Avenue home. For a second daughter had been born at Manchester, Vermont that past summer—hastening into life, it appeared, in order to arrive on July 4, though her father had not yet reached Manchester and her mother had only two days before moved nurse, governess, children, and baggage from the Equinox House to a private home.

There had been much writing back and forth between husband and wife as to the proper place for the family to go when summer

heat should begin. Mr. McCormick had favored this village in the Green Mountains, and his wife was enthusiastic about the air—"as pure as any I ever breathed"—and the beauty of village and mountains—"all nature is clothed in the intensest green I ever saw." The children, Cyrus and Mary, were very happy there.

Two days after the baby came, Mrs. McCormick wrote to her husband: "Baby was born day before yesterday, & I have been perfectly well ever since. . . . Baby is so fine & healthy, & really pretty. She sleeps & *eats* well." The new arrival was to remain "Baby," or tentatively "Nettie," until after her parents' return from their second trip abroad. On shipboard Mrs. McCormick met and admired an Anita and adopted for her baby this name so closely related to her own. To Anita she added the name of the Empress Eugénie. Anita herself, however, dropped the Eugénie while still in her girlhood.

It was a busy life that Mrs. McCormick was leading now—as mother of three children, mistress of a large house, director of governesses, tutors, maids, sharer in the activities of a man who was a human dynamo. She had many social responsibilities too and played her part in church and philanthropy.

Well known people from various parts of the country came and went through the hospitable doors of No. 40—visitors from outside of New York such as Dr. James McCosh, president of the College of New Jersey at Princeton, Dr. Benjamin Mosby Smith, from the faculty of Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia, clergymen of note like Dr. William S. Plumer of South Carolina, and many others. Stately Dr. Plumer, with his flowing white beard and hair and his slouch hat, and young Mrs. McCormick, with her rosy cheeks, made an impressive couple as they rode horseback in Central Park. One of Dr. Smith's two little daughters who accompanied him to New York remembered always this "sweet, beautiful home." She wrote: "The most distinct memory I have . . . is of the children's room where you took us and let us get acquainted with your little ones. It amuses me to think how astonished I was at hearing your son Cyrus speak French to the butler. . . . I had seldom, if ever, heard a foreign language spoken and that a child could speak French with such every-day ease filled me with wonder."

Among the New Yorkers who came to the house were Samuel

J. Tilden, later to be governor of New York and almost President when he was the Democratic candidate opposing Hayes, Cyrus Field, promoter of the first Atlantic cable, James Gordon Bennett, founder and publisher of the *New York Herald*, and S. L. M. Barlow, eminent lawyer, ardent Democrat, enthusiastic bibliophile. Not least among the callers was Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*. Mr. Greeley sometimes came, informally, to breakfast—came, Mrs. McCormick recalled, to obtain peace and quiet away from the turmoil of his own home, where Mrs. Greeley and her maids were all too often in an uproar of dissension. As Cyrus the second remembered it, he would appear at about half past eight, the new *Tribune* under his arm, exchange greetings with the boy, and retire to the library to scan the paper. "Just tell your father and mother I'm here," he would direct. "But they need not hurry—I'll stay for breakfast." Cyrus would promptly carry the word upstairs and presently his parents would descend.

Many of the McCormicks' close personal friends in New York were among a large group of Southerners who had settled in the North before the war or had come to New York at its close to repair their estate. Among the latter were General and Mrs. Pryor, whom they had known in Washington. In the difficult sixties, after Appomattox, General Pryor was seeking a legal foothold and contending against the prejudice felt in New York toward a former Confederate general, and his brilliant family was living on courage and resourcefulness in Brooklyn. The friendship, only interrupted by the separations of wartime, was gradually resumed and continued as the Pryor sons and daughters worked out their interesting destinies. Even after General Pryor had become an honored judge and Mrs. Pryor a recognized author, a succession of difficult and tragic situations in the lives of the Pryor children made the helpful friendship of Nettie McCormick doubly precious.

Nearer at hand were the Algernon Sydney Sullivans, just around the corner in West Eleventh Street. Mr. Sullivan was a prominent attorney of the highest standing in legal circles for ability and integrity and a truly public-spirited citizen. Between Mrs. Sullivan and Mrs. McCormick, as between Mrs. McCormick and Mrs. Pryor, a close friendship grew, to last through the years until they were noted, when they appeared in public, as two "beautiful old ladies." Both were charming, gracious, gentle but spirited. Mrs.

McCormick's marriage to a Southerner supplied a bond with Mary Mildred Sullivan, a Virginian married to a Northerner, and congenial interests bound them together.

Mrs. Sullivan was the leader in a movement to raise money for the desperate needs of the women and children of the South. A number of well known women joined her in forming the "New York Ladies' Southern Relief Society," and in this number Mrs. McCormick was naturally included. It was a philanthropy that called for a certain amount of moral courage in the bitterness of war and early postwar days.

There was a Sullivan son, George, of about young Cyrus's age, and the little boys soon were comrades. They and the other lads of that neighborhood played busily around that block on lower Fifth Avenue, specializing in the digging of large deep holes for residential purposes in the Sullivans' back yard. The McCormick back yard, it appeared, was paved and perhaps psychologically less available.

Another benevolence in which Mrs. McCormick worked with Mrs. Sullivan was the Nursery and Child's Hospital, perhaps her first active participation in the practical problems of an institution. This hospital had been founded in 1854 to care for the children of wet nurses and take daily charge of infants whose mothers worked away from home. Gradually it had become a foundling home and a lying-in hospital, with some state aid. Mrs. McCormick and Mrs. Sullivan were both energetic members of the board of managers. At one time Mrs. McCormick and two others constituted a "finance committee" to discover an enormous leakage and correct abuses—a trust executed with such vigor that the directress in praising the zealous committee nevertheless suggested that economy was being overdone! One year, Mrs. Sullivan remembered, the two friends went together to the annual ball given for the cause.

On Sundays the McCormick family joined the worshippers in "The Presbyterian Church on Fifth Avenue at Nineteenth Street," as it was clumsily called until shortened to the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. Pew 51 was their church home for at least several years while their membership remained in the North Church, Chicago. Naturally they found the church congenial, for their friend Dr. Nathan Rice had come to this parish when, to

their grief, he left the faculty of the Seminary. After he resigned in 1867, the pulpit was occupied by Dr. John Hall, to whose entire family the McCormicks became deeply attached.

Mr. McCormick's home was also his office, the focus of the many interests that held him in the East. And if his home was his office, so increasingly Mr. McCormick's wife was his assistant. Her handwriting appears frequently in his papers of the sixties, sometimes as a copyist, sometimes as the responsible correspondent in his affairs. In his library and "business room" at No. 40 space was allowed in the shelves for boxes to hold papers, and Mrs. McCormick did the filing, often mounting a stepladder for the purpose. In addition to copying letters by hand—"a free, practical easy hand—businesslike in all respects"—she sometimes made letter-press copies. And lest the present generation may not know the meaning of that term, let it be informed that letters were written in a special ink, the pages were then applied to a dampened tissue paper sheet and the whole was pressed in a heavy piece of clamping machinery not easy to operate. Young Cyrus had a turn at it sometimes; and one year a nephew of Mr. McCormick, acting as his secretary, aided.

As for Mrs. McCormick's share in her husband's counsels, all who knew her testify that it was constant, pertinent, required. In a letter of 1873 he wrote to her what was obviously true both before and after: "I feel the want of your counsel too in matters of importance requiring my attention, &c."

It was business that took Mr. McCormick abroad in 1867—the advancement of the reaper in Europe and in particular its presentation at the Universal Exposition to be held in Paris that year. This was an ambitious undertaking of the Emperor Napoleon III, designed no doubt to bolster his weakening prestige and to divert attention from the menacing European situation. Mr. McCormick hesitated about entering his machines, but finally decided to try. As usual, he wished his wife to accompany him. But the three little children, the youngest only a baby, were a problem: should she leave them, take them along, or stay at home with them? The final decision was made at almost the last moment. The children were entrusted to Mr. and Mrs. Luther Wright of Oswego, New York, friends of Nettie McCormick and of her Uncle Merick's family for many years. They offered a comfortable home, large grounds,

fresh vegetables, "a cow for baby's nourishment," and Mrs. McCormick surrendered to this "glowing picture of juvenile felicity."

Mr. and Mrs. McCormick sailed on Saturday, the fifteenth of June. From on board the *St. Laurent* Mrs. McCormick wrote to Ermina: "I could not see my way clear to leave the children or to bring them until Friday. I preferred to remain at home with them, but this Mr. McC. would not listen to. As it is, I shall not remain from home long." (A few years later she was to say, "When I am once away from home I have no power to come back when I wish to.") She was content with her decision, however—"Now that I am here and they are so happily situated in a healthy locality and lack nothing I am satisfied it was the wisest to leave them." But the farewells had been hard. "Dear baby, I kissed her so many times good bye, but she only looked at me in astonishment. I was glad to get a last wave of your handkerchief as you & Cyrus & Mary sat in the carriage as the ship left the wharf."

At the end of two weeks the McCormicks were established in the Grand Hotel near the new opera house in Paris. No doubt they soon made their way to the Champ de Mars to view the acres of Exposition display. A vast building had been erected in the center of the great space, fronting on the left bank of the Seine, to house the varied exhibits—everything conceivable in the way of fine arts, industrial apparatus and processes, agricultural aids, furniture, food, clothing, plants—in short, the world of 1867 in ten groups with ninety-five classes.

Mr. McCormick was entering both mower and reaper in the field contests connected with the exhibitions. The first mower contest—inconclusive because of bad weather—was over before the McCormicks arrived. The second, in midsummer, gave Mr. McCormick third place. Reaper contests, to take place in grain, had to await the harvest.

Meantime, the McCormicks attended a spectacular distribution of prizes on July 1 by the Emperor Napoleon, accompanied by the Empress Eugénie, at which the first Sultan of Turkey ever to leave his shores and the Prince of Wales were guests. Fifty thousand people, Mrs. McCormick wrote, filled a vast hall, colors rioted, bells rang, drums beat. And finally the imperial party walked around the building, the Empress in white satin, radiant with dia-

monds, gracious—"every inch an Empress," Mrs. McCormick thought.

Another activity, in the interval before the reaper contests, was to make the acquaintance of "M. *Tisserand*, M. *Chevalier*, and other Frenchmen influential in the Great Exposition, the former being the governor of the Emperor's entire landed estates and the latter the great French political economist."

Mr. McCormick probably cultivated acquaintance with others of importance too—hoping at least to offset the prejudice which he thought might rest upon him as an American, in view of President Johnson's attitude toward the Emperor's Mexican adventure. Seeking to make sure of the right judges was a routine part of the preparation for such contests and not a practice of any one contestant. However, no judge, friendly or otherwise, could have altered the difference in time between the first and second machines when on July 27 reapers were tried in tangled wheat. Mr. McCormick's took less than half the time required by Wood's to finish the course. Three days later it won easily in oats on the Emperor's farm at Vincennes, and purchase of the winning machine on the field by M. *Tisserand* capped the climax.

Then came Mr. McCormick's hour of special triumph. The Emperor invited him to exhibit the reaper in his presence on the royal farm at Châlons-sur-Marne. Naturally he accepted and enjoyed (in his own words) "the honor of a pleasant interview with his majesty on the fields for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour." After carefully examining the mechanical construction and practical working of the machine in cutting a heavy crop of oats, the Emperor expressed his appreciation, thanked the inventor, and ordered more machines for use on his various farms. Moreover, Mr. McCormick received a clear intimation that he would be made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor and be accorded the highest honors of the exhibition. No wonder that just after the thrilling event he telegraphed to his wife in Paris, "All goes well," and presently sent back to the home press an exuberant cable of extravagant length.

With such honors in prospect, there was nothing to do but wait when it became known that the ceremonies would not take place before the first of the year. So much for Mrs. McCormick's belief that she would not be long away from her children.

Meantime she received reassuring messages about them. Ermina Merick, who spent some time at Oswego, and Mary Fowler, who visited them, both reported. The Wrights did too—Mr. and Mrs. Wright and their eighteen-year-old daughter Alice—and the nurse, Jane. With the aid of these letters it must have been easy for the mother to visualize her active trio. "Cyrus and Mary have each a little bed for flowers. Mr. Wright has bought a spade and wheelbarrow for Cyrus which is just the thing for him. Every evening each of the children take their little glass and go out to get some fresh milk right from the cow. Mary says she drinks six glasses and it is so good. I am sure they will grow and be very healthy here. . . . The baby is just as good as possible. . . . She has a little high chair and sits with Jane at the table. . . . Baby has two teeth nearly through. Yesterday when Jane was walking with her she met several cows. Nettie [the baby's unofficial name] says 'Bow-wow' very loud and raising her hands with so much delight that the children could but laugh." Another letter pictured baby as "just as round and plump as can be, her little fat legs can hardly support her, but she manages to push a chair around considerably, and I think she will be walking when you see her again."

That time was not to come for several months, after the awaited honors and awards had been conferred. By an imperial decree, on January 4, 1868, Mr. McCormick received the rank of Chevalier in the Order of the Legion of Honor, as "the inventor of the reaping machine." The little red rosette, symbol of this honor, was to appear faithfully in his buttonhole ever after.

On the following day the ceremonies of award were held in the Tuileries. At half past one with due pomp the various commissioners and members of the international jury were ushered into the Salle des Maréchaux, where along both sides the objets d'art intended for exhibitors in agriculture and horticulture awaited distribution. Presently, with still more ceremony, the Emperor entered, accompanied by the Prince Imperial, a lad of eleven, honorary president of the Exposition. These two were preceded by high officers of the crown and other officials and followed by all the ministers.

When all were ranged in place, the Emperor read a brief address and then awarded the medals, first to the winners of the eleven Grand Prizes. "Three of the eleven were awarded to the Emperors

of Russia, Austria, and France for benefits conferred upon agriculture, amelioration of the condition of laborers, &c." Mr. McCormick's medal and the prize of 10,000 francs were conferred upon him as a "benefactor of mankind" and as a "skillful mechanician." Though his rival Walter A. Wood also received a grand prize, it was as "constructor of agricultural machines," a description which did not heavily cloud Mr. McCormick's satisfaction in having been acclaimed by France as "the inventor of the reaper."

Because Mrs. McCormick was ill, she and Mr. McCormick had to be presented separately at Court. On January 8 she saw her husband off to the Grand Ball, pronouncing him very handsome in his court costume, which was decked with gold lace, gilt buttons, a dress sword. He escorted three women friends, one of whom was presented with him. "The ball was a grand affair," wrote the absent wife. "The Empress & Emperor passed before the Ladies & Gentlemen whom the different foreign ministers wished to present to their Majesties. . . . Then all repaired to the ball rooms, where the Emperor & Empress sat in chairs of state upon a raised dais called 'The Throne,' while the ball went on. The first officers of the Government and the Army led the ball. The glitter of diamonds, the flash of uniforms, the light of bright eyes, the tones of music seraphic, all combined to give pleasure to every sense."

When on January 22 Mrs. McCormick finally made her own deep bow, the experience apparently lacked thrill. "Well, the ball is over," she wrote. "The presentation to their Majesties the Emperor & Empress was simple. About 25 Americans of whom I was one, & some English & Turks stood in a line around the salon while the Minister Dix (Gen'l) presented. I was disappointed—it was hot & crowded—a great pain came to my breast."

The bad effects of Mrs. McCormick's illness were heightened by her yearning to be with her children and the disappointment of repeated postponements. Eventually, however, all was done and some time in March the family reached New York. With their three children, all greatly grown, restored to them, they were again in their Fifth Avenue home.

Here in 1870 a third daughter came to the McCormick household—a winsome baby with wide-open blue eyes, whom they named Alice. But her stay was only eight months long. "I hear this morning," Mrs. Sullivan wrote, "your little angel was but a

loan from the Heavenly Father, & that with wings unspotted by her short sojourn here, she has flown from the arms of her Mother to the Bosom of her Saviour." Separated from the other children, a few months later, Mrs. McCormick wrote to them: "I see dear little children on the street sometimes just the age dear Alice would have been, and I observe their cunning ways with a sad interest."

Though the McCormicks had been happy to leave hotel for home life, the Fifth Avenue Hotel remained their resource—for important parties, such as a grand dinner for Junius S. Morgan, and as their home when transition was made from house to vacation place and back again.

It was in the last year of the sixties that the McCormicks first chose Richfield Springs as a vacation resort and found there the most satisfactory of watering places. They went again in 1870 and 1871, and in the latter year Mr. McCormick bought six acres of undeveloped land on a hill at the edge of the village, looking toward building there a country home. He was to build later but, because of the interruption caused by the Chicago Fire, not until the early eighties. In intervening years, however, the family spent parts of several seasons in the village, and Mr. McCormick developed the property with great zest.

The strong sulphur water was the special inducement. Baths in these waters had been recommended to Mr. McCormick as a cure for his eczema and rheumatism, and apparently he found them more efficacious than the other springs he visited. The place had additional charms. Set in beautiful hill and lake country on the great Western Turnpike connecting Albany and Buffalo, the little town was a delightful resort. In a shady part at its center stood the Spring House and baths—"a terrible smelling bath-house with high narrow iron tubs," as Harold McCormick remembered it—while across the street another large hotel shared the fashionable patronage of the place. The powerful odor of sulphur water made itself known near the park, and Indian legends about this astonishing liquid heightened the interest.

That first year the railroad was still fifteen miles away, and the journey was made by means of a stage coach—"a grand affair drawn by four horses," as young Cyrus accurately recalled it, "having great leather springs forward and backward so that the coach literally swung on the springs. . . . When this coach would

arrive at the Spring House with the cracking of whips it was a daily sensation."

For their first season the McCormicks rented rooms in a house a few doors from the Spring House, where no doubt they boarded. In other seasons before their home was built they sometimes stayed at the Spring House, but Mrs. McCormick deplored the effect of hotel life on the children and didn't care much for it herself—"same people, same inane dancing at night, same inane company on piazzas."

Often they lived in a rented house, particularly the Bryan house, a commodious red brick facing a lovely line of the hills. Under the creeping myrtle of its grounds Cyrus and Mary buried a pet kitten killed by falling down the stair well from the third story. Here Mr. McCormick played croquet with his children and played it so well that they had to become expert too. And thence the children went boating on the lake below the village, or the whole family shared in the driving in smart turnouts that was the fashionable feature of the afternoon—an informal parade of victorias, landaus, phaetons that started at the Spring House and swept around the near-by lake or on to Cooperstown and larger Lake Otsego.

Chapter 8

CITIZENS OF THE NEW CHICAGO

OCTOBER 8, 1871—a day never to be forgotten!

Mr. McCormick had been in Chicago on business for more than a month. Mrs. McCormick, with the three children, was on the point of returning to New York from Richfield Springs, lingering there to enjoy the wine of that autumn air, the glorious autumn pageant—"the beautiful landscape stretched out before our eyes—the hills on each side of us, and the village below, all arrayed in gorgeous crimson and gold."

Into that paradise came crashing the dreadful news of the Chicago Fire. From the recollections of Cyrus the second, who was twelve in 1871, and from a very few written sources the story emerges, though not without uncertainties. But that the word of calamity came to the family in Richfield Springs by way of the village telegrapher is clear. The story is that Mrs. McCormick undertook to send her husband a telegram and that the telegrapher, either in person or through the excited young Cyrus, rushed back the news that no message could be received in Chicago, the city was burning.

Whether the message Mrs. McCormick tried to send was her reply to her husband's request for her to come or some earlier thought of hers is not clear. But his word to her, found among her papers after long years, was: "All well be quiet could you all come here answer."

At any rate, Mrs. McCormick hastily rearranged her plans and started for Chicago not later, it appears, than Tuesday October tenth. She entrusted the two little girls to relatives in Detroit, taking Cyrus on with her into the wrecked city.

The train was stopped on the South Side, and they were met by

a representative of Mr. McCormick with a carriage to convey them to St. Caroline's Court Hotel on the West Side. Whatever their route, they probably drove close enough to the burned area to see desolation—smoking debris, charred skeletons of buildings, towering piles of burning wheat and of coal, stifling smoke and dust everywhere—and already men picking their way among the ruins on their way to rebuild Chicago.

When they met Mr. McCormick, weary and haggard, in a partly burned coat, he received them (his wife wrote later) "with a spirit unbroken and a courage unspent." No doubt he told them of the long hours of Chicago's terror through which he had lived: of the outbreak of the fire in the O'Learys' barn in DeKoven Street; of its mad sweep on the wings of a southwest gale through a section of the West Side, its many frame buildings tinder-dry in a terrible drought; leaping the river, as no one believed it could do; roaring on in great sheets of flame across the business district, where substantial marble and brick buildings went down with flimsy veneer and wood; again leaping the river to consume the North Side and drive thousands suffocating to the lake margin and beyond.

Of Mr. McCormick's own experience almost no account remains, only a few brief references and a few words of his wife. Years later she told how, driven from his hotel by the oncoming flames, he hurried to the home of his brother Leander, urged the family out, and then became a "fugitive to the West Side." By this time the factory, nearer the river, must have gone. Of just where and how he spent the rest of that terrible day and all the time until the fire stopped its ferocious attacks there is no record.

As Cyrus Junior recalled the events, the family passed the first night after Mrs. McCormick's arrival on mattresses spread on the floor in that West Side hotel, because all the rooms were filled. He remembered standing in line at the Third Presbyterian Church, a few blocks away, to ask for bread and blankets. By this time the resources of the unburned West Side had been supplemented by provisions from all over the country, rolling in by trainloads. Many of rich and poor alike were on relief. But shortly Mrs. McCormick was one of those who plunged into organizing aid for the destitute, listening to applications for clothes and bedding, and cooperating in the distribution of supplies. Before long the Chi-

cago Relief and Aid Society was coordinating all the separate efforts.

The McCormicks were again residents of Chicago. Returning to it in its darkest hour, they stayed, sharing the faith in Chicago's future which turned the calamity into a blessing. Like so many others, they resolved to rebuild.

On October 12 a temporary factory office was set up at 71 Ashland Avenue. That same day a circular went out to the farmers who were in debt to the company, announcing that "we intend to put everything in operation again as fast as Men and Money can do it." There is a strong, clear family tradition that it was Mrs. McCormick who promptly said the decisive word as to rebuilding. Assuming that she reached Chicago no later than the morning of the 12th, there was time for Mr. McCormick to consult her before deciding. He supported the tradition by implication in the draft of an address written in 1873 by saying that his wife was with him two days after he telegraphed for her, when he "at once determined to proceed with rebuilding." According to the story handed down, Mr. and Mrs. McCormick drove together to the smoking ruins, where others of the company were gathered. The question was asked, "Shall we start the small engine for repairs or the big engine for manufacturing?" Mrs. McCormick answered by giving the order direct to start the big engine, then appealed to her husband, "Mr. McCormick, isn't that correct?" and won his confirmation.

The work of salvage and rebuilding began with great vigor. Records were found intact in an iron vault. Some machinery was secured, piece by piece; a temporary two-story building to accommodate both office and works was rushed up on the ruins of the former factory as fast as materials could be secured, and early in 1872 the business of manufacturing reapers was under way. Mrs. McCormick visited the office—"a comfortable large room—built of rather rough boards whitewashed or painted—warmed by two stoves. The plain unpainted pine desks were arranged in order and the different office clerks all busily at work—as if there had been no great fire to exile them all for 4 mos." She rejoiced in "the cheerful buzz of the machine shop" on the ground floor.

But the question of rebuilding—a real factory on another site—was not yet settled. And on Mrs. McCormick's vigorous and telling

part in the final decisions that brought into being the large factory on Blue Island Avenue there is clear contemporaneous evidence in one of her journals. But there is no mention of the various motives involved. In the family tradition, Mr. McCormick had reflected that they had enough to live on and it might be well for him to retire, but his wife had felt strongly that the welfare of her children, especially of her son, would be best served by having a family business as background and incentive.

An account written by Emma Dryer for Cyrus H. McCormick in 1921 names still other considerations. Miss Dryer, a religious worker at the time of the Fire associated with Dwight L. Moody's work, was close to Mrs. McCormick and no doubt was recording memories of Mrs. McCormick's reminiscences. "The question was before them," she wrote, "whether to return to New York or to remain in Chicago. She said they prayed and fully discussed the subject. One morning as he [Mr. McCormick] went away, he said, 'Nettie, I have come to my conclusion. You will outlive me, & have the children to care for. You must decide it.'

"She said she considered the Providential leadings. . . . Their Church relations were pleasant here, and your father's plans for his long hoped for Theological Seminary were here. . . . So she told your father when he came home; and they moved to Fulton Str. . . ."

Long before the Fire steps had been taken toward moving the factory to a new site. The buildings on the river had been too small since the mid-sixties and investment in more land there was too costly to contemplate. Expansion of manufacturing into the prairie side of Chicago was under way. For some time the McCormicks had been negotiating for land on the south branch of the river. Now, after the Fire, negotiations began again. The desired site was the property of Samuel J. Walker in Canalport, about six miles from the city's center. There were many difficulties before the deal was closed, and Mrs. McCormick shared in many meetings involving the McCormick brothers, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Jewett, the McCormicks' lawyer.

On June 26, 1872 she wrote: "This PM I took Mr. Chapman & Mary & Anna with Anita down to the much talked of property on the River for which negotiations have so long been pending—8 months—I think—for the proposed new Reaper works. I saw

the land for the first time— But was well acquainted with it from frequent consultation with its locality on the map. It is about 2 miles from Madison St. on a branch of the South Branch of Chicago River and at *present planted with cabbages*. 'What a loss of labor & cabbages,' I said to Mr. Chapman, 'if we should go on building there in July—which I most fervently hope we will do.' To this point I have turned my best arguments—and used my strongest powers of persuasion for many months—and to the accomplishment of this end I have uniformly urged my husband to close the tedious negotiations with Walker by purchasing the property and getting the undertaking of building started."

Two days later she describes the situation that made closing the difficult Walker deal so urgent: "Situation in our Reaper business today is that our works, built upon the ruins, are now being pushed to *their utmost* to turn out Reapers & mowers—working *day & night*—and that we are shipping 60 daily—that agents from all points south, west, & north are asking for larger supplies of machines than can be granted them. Harvest never so promising—demand for machines never so great. We could sell twice as *many as we have or can supply*. Harvest now progressing in Tennessee & Ky."

Her entry on June 29 shows her powerful influence in her husband's business as no other testimony could do: "I constantly urge Mr. McC. to miss no opportunity to go forward with the new factory *this year*—not to wait until *next year* to make the decision whether to build or not—*make it now*—decide now to have the factory *ready* for turning out Reapers for the next harvest—build *this summer* & be *ready* for work in *the fall*. I have faith that this *could be done*—that the building could be ready to receive machinery by *November* if we go at it *immediately*. . . . This I have urged upon my husband for months. I believe he will do it. He has told me lately that I have been 'urging him on with whip & spur,' and that he 'makes the decision now to go on with the trade principally under my influence'—to use his own words."

When, presently, the transaction was completed, the troubles were not at an end. The place was remote and transportation facilities for materials and men were not well developed. Mr. Walker's contract called for the provision of a shuttle line connecting with the railroad and a deepening of the water course, and Mr. Walker

did not at once make good on these points. When at last the buildings were under way, there were other difficulties, including an epidemic of influenza among horses—a first-class catastrophe in that day with which the McCormicks dealt by importing oxen! After the four buildings were up, the problems of getting mechanics and office force to the remote spot at seven o'clock in the morning had to be handled. The hampering mud of the prairie, the distance from the farthest bus line were dealt with by the erection of a boarding house and forty cottages. And on February 1, 1873, steam was turned on, the new factory was open, and Chicago had made another thrust westward.

But we are getting ahead of the personal side of the story. Not content to live long in a hotel, especially one that was rather dismal in spite of marble and art glass splendors, Mrs. McCormick soon began to hunt a furnished house. The only residence owned by her husband at the time of the Fire that they had any thought of occupying, was the attractive Burch house on Michigan Avenue near Madison Street. It had burned, with part of the furnishings from the Dearborn Street house which had been placed there. So had the rest of those furnishings, variously stored. Nearly all of the houses owned by the McCormick brothers had gone too. The North Side, flattened and blackened, had nothing to offer. The South Side did not appeal. So the McCormicks found a home on the West Side—and a West Side church home, too, the Third Presbyterian. For Mr. McCormick could not tolerate the preaching of Professor David Swing at Fourth Presbyterian Church (the name under which North Church and Westminster had united).

The furnished house that Mrs. McCormick chose was on a corner of Fulton and Sheldon Streets, and to this the family removed at the end of April, 1872. It was a large frame house unhappily not far from the tracks of the Chicago and North Western Railway. What with the persistent dust in the city from the clearing away of debris and the smoke and cinders from the railway, life at Sheldon Street was a battle with dirt. But the house was set in spacious grounds.

Upon this scene entered, on May 5, 1872, the third son of Cyrus Hall and Nettie Fowler McCormick—Harold Fowler. Not that he was named Harold at once, however. Arthur was considered and Eldridge was at least suggested, and his mother leaned so

strongly to Theodore that for a time the baby was thus called. But the name Harold held, selected after scanning lists of names. Fowler, of course, was for his mother's family. The child, a lovely baby, was sound and well, the mother likewise and extremely busy. "Ah, what a busy woman you are and will ever be I expect," wrote Mrs. Sullivan. "I had apprehended Mr. McCormick's absence would throw a burden upon your shoulders, yet I know you take great pleasure in the knowledge that you are really a helpmeet to him."

Helpmeet was indeed the key word of her relation to her husband's busy life. All of his interests were quite unaffectedly "our" interests, in their correspondence and in their shared activities. These were, first in order of time, building; not only the factory, but his real estate investments. After the Fire, Mrs. McCormick took the lead in overseeing the erection of several buildings, including the McCormick and Reaper blocks, as well as stores and residences. "With all this responsibility on our hands," she wrote, referring to the problem of the factory, "we have to meet the difficulties connected with vast building undertakings. We have building going on simultaneously at seven different points amounting to several hundred thousand dollars. . . . The stone for the McCormick Building does not seem to have been decided upon—none of it cut & *all* work stopped in consequence—and Mr. McCormick gone to Baltimore. What is to be done?"

Mr. McCormick had gone to the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore, which adopted the Liberal Republican platform and its candidate, Horace Greeley, in whose campaign Mr. McCormick was to take active part. From Baltimore he went to New York to help notify Greeley, thence to Richfield Springs for a needed water cure. Incidentally, he himself just missed being elevated at the convention from national committeeman to chairman of the national committee.

Though Mr. McCormick kept in touch with all his varied concerns, it fell to his wife to carry out his wishes, adding much initiative of her own. Working with the well-known architect John M. Van Osdel and with the McCormicks' own agents, she checked building material, pushing its delivery, consulting with stonecutters, herself studying Amherst, Elyria, Columbia stone to find a

kind free from iron as her husband desired. Combining as she did architectural taste, sound business judgment, shrewdness, and an endless capacity for detail, she was well fitted to supervise this work.

No wonder she wrote after a crowded day: "Tonight I am so tired—children's lessons to see to for the tutor tomorrow—Baby to nurse—buildings to look after—architects to see—some letters to write. Well after all this is done the flesh is indeed weary."

The first months of 1873 saw the beginning of a new interest, primarily Mr. McCormick's perhaps, but for long years his wife's. It was a publishing venture: the *Interior*, destined to become one of the most widely known of denominational magazines, with an editor of outstanding personality. Mr. McCormick had bought stock in the Western Presbyterian Publishing Company when a plan was formed to revive the gasping *Northwestern Presbyterian* as the *Interior*. He was, however, much disappointed in the paper. It appeared to him to be New School and radical, whereas he was Old School and conservative. The plant—all but its debts—went in the Fire, and afterward Mr. McCormick's friends urged him persistently to buy it as an instrument for promoting the Seminary and the causes of reunion of Presbyterians North and South. Finally he yielded.

At that moment, early in 1873, Dr. Francis L. Patton, destined for years of prominence at Princeton, was editor and William C. Gray, who after the Fire had left an Ohio connection to try to save the publication, was business manager. When long afterward Mr. Gray told the story of his early difficulties, Mrs. McCormick appeared in the role of at least assistant angel. In that difficult time, he had found the going hard, and failure loomed. He was advised to call on Mrs. McCormick in her husband's absence. A maid admitted him, ushered him into the drawing room, and presently a young lady appeared. "I beg pardon," Dr. Gray said, "I desired to see Mrs. McCormick." The young lady said she was Mrs. McCormick, asked his mission, and listened attentively. At the conclusion of his talk she assured him that Mr. McCormick already knew of his work and that it would not be allowed to fail. Presently by investing \$15,000 in the paper, Mr. McCormick became its sole owner. By mid-January 1873 it began to appear with "Cyrus H.

McCormick, Publisher" on the masthead—weekly, in enormous pages of fine type, without emphasis or variety, strange to modern eyes.

The relation developed happily in two ways: Under Mr. Gray's management and before long his editing, the *Interior* became that *rara avis*, a religious journal that was self-supporting. Publisher and editor saw eye to eye on many subjects and easily agreed on a program: No party politics, impartiality as to Old and New Schools, promotion of the interests of the Seminary, and reunion of the Northern and Southern Presbyterian churches. Shortly before Mr. McCormick's death, Dr. Gray bought a half interest in the paper with the understanding that the inventor's name should always appear on the masthead. Mrs. McCormick took a hand from time to time in editing the *Interior*, even before Mr. McCormick's death. She asked her son Cyrus to send descriptive letters from abroad, which she would "have published in the *Interior*," and occasionally extended a similar invitation to others. Once she wrote a charming letter of apology to Dr. Gray for having in his absence overruled his assistant by including in the paper a sermon delivered at the General Assembly. But her long relation to the paper includes no instance of interference beyond a reasonable point.

Many others came to that Sheldon Street house with religious interests to promote. The full stream of college presidents and missionaries had not yet started. But there were men from the Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, Southern as well as Chicago clergymen, and always men from the faculty of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the North-West.

Mr. McCormick and his dearest philanthropy were on better terms now. But there had been a long period of strain. While the McCormicks were still abroad the Seminary had moved into a home of its own. Even before Mr. McCormick had offered endowment twenty-five acres had been given to it on a sparsely settled section of the North Side. With much effort some fifteen thousand dollars had been collected, and by February 1864 the Seminary had moved into its Central Hall—later called Ewing. It was a three-story brick building—*was*? It still is, serving usefully after ninety years.

But the sixties were troubled years for the Seminary, with the

troubles of the times. Here as well as elsewhere, the issues of the war and slavery made high tensions. Mr. McCormick was unalterably opposed to the intrusion of this "political" issue into his beloved church. A majority of the Board of Directors had agreed. But in the middle sixties—after the war yet in a time of great emotional strain—the control of the Seminary had gradually changed. The "Radicals"—extremists in anti-slavery sentiments—had gained power. Mr. McCormick was eager to have Dr. Rice, who had resigned in 1861 to take a New York pastorate, return to his former chair in the Seminary. With that in mind he attended the General Assembly of 1866. Dr. Rice was put in nomination but not elected, and the paper Mr. McCormick prepared to set forth his views did not reach the floor. Mrs. McCormick wrote to him sympathetically while he was there: "I feel so sorry for you my dear husband, who have done so much, & struggled so long almost alone, against the fanatical tide, & given your money freely for the dissemination of *moderate* opinion, to see it all going to the support of your enemies, & your efforts almost abortive."

Mr. McCormick accepted as the occupant of the chair called by his name a man who belonged to the "Radicals"—accepted him in preference to a worse evil. The professor died within the year and the worse evil threatened. A movement to transfer to Mr. McCormick's chair Dr. Willis G. Lord, outspoken abolitionist, brought on a bitter struggle. The transfer was actually made; Dr. Lord against Mr. McCormick's strong opposition was put in the chair endowed by and named for Mr. McCormick. And when a man of the same way of thinking was put in Dr. Lord's place and Mr. McCormick was asked to pay the fourth instalment of his promised endowment, he refused. A rapid-fire, vitriolic correspondence followed. Though the issue in a sense turned on the abstract question of whether the donor of money to an institution has a right to dictate its policies, this was submerged emotionally in the sharp concrete issue of North-South sympathies. Well, the emotion and the period passed. In 1870 Dr. Lord resigned to accept another post, and a promising young man, an able conservative, came to take his place. This was Dr. Patton, already referred to, whom the Seminary was to lose within a few years to Princeton. He came in 1871, the year of the great Fire.

Though that devastation, sweeping close to the Seminary, left

its building unscathed—an escape that Mr. McCormick as well as others regarded as providential—the Fire was nevertheless a serious setback. And hard on the heels of the Fire came the panic of 1873. To be sure, on the very day of the Fire by a curious chance Mr. McCormick wrote a \$45,000 check for the endowment of his chair, thus giving nearly twice the amount of the instalment from which, the year before, the Assembly had formally released him. And in 1875 a second building—the chapel—was erected, Mr. McCormick aiding with a contribution. Yet the way was difficult, disheartening. In 1880 a somewhat desperate action was taken: the faculty was asked to resign, their resignations to take effect a year later. It was a painful chapter. All resigned. But Dr. LeRoy J. Halsey, a member of the first faculty, was presently appointed professor emeritus with a lessened program.

Reorganization proceeded slowly. But by 1883 four new professors were installed, all from pastorates: Thomas H. Skinner, Willis G. Craig, David C. Marquis, and Herrick Johnson, who continued as pastor of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago. For this new faculty Mr. McCormick provided, in large part, four new residences—four dignified, commodious houses of pressed brick and stone. Dr. Skinner took an immediate interest in the campus, which when he came was weedy and overgrown, enclosed by a dilapidated rail fence. He had it put in order, supplying the funds from his own pocketbook, which happened to be fatter than most clerical purses, and in addition took the initiative in equipping the buildings with water and gas. About this time, too, the neighborhood was greatly changed by a change in the investment of endowment funds. Instead of putting these funds into securities, the Seminary cautiously used them in the erection of houses for rent near the Seminary. In the course of a few years an unattractive neighborhood consisting of a few casual houses and many cabbage patches had been transformed into rows of neat red brick houses.

Still another interest that was brought to the hospitable door of the Sheldon Street House, welcomed by both Mr. and Mrs. McCormick, was the work centering about that “square block of sanctity,” Dwight L. Moody.

In the sixties, from New York, Mr. McCormick had shared in the building of Chicago’s first Young Men’s Christian Association

building on Mr. Moody's plea. It had burned. To the succeeding building, which went in the great Fire of 1871, Mr. McCormick contributed and later continued to stand by Mr. Moody "in his great undertakings." In the "Bible Work" that Mr. Moody started in 1873 the McCormicks took a deep interest.

About to go to England on a preaching mission, Mr. Moody had entrusted leadership in the new undertaking to Emma Dryer—a former normal school teacher, now the teacher of a large Bible class in Mr. Moody's church. It was to Mrs. McCormick that Emma Dryer introduced the new work. On her first visit to 62 North Sheldon Street Mrs. McCormick took a heart-warming interest in the plans for cottage prayer meetings, Sunday schools, visiting the sick and prisoners, and other ministry. She promised aid and from that time on Miss Dryer's work, and Miss Dryer, were on Mrs. McCormick's heart.

Meantime, throughout the years Mr. Moody was a welcome guest. There were long talks in Mr. McCormick's study, and the household was enthusiastically aware of this buoyant, vital personality as Mr. Moody came and went. Mr. Moody and Mr. McCormick, in Mrs. McCormick's opinion, had points of similarity and were always good friends. She had vivid memories, too, of the great Chicago meetings of the winter of 1876-77, in a tabernacle erected for the purpose on Monroe Street between Franklin and Market. "Mr. McCormick was much interested in the services," she wrote, "and wished his family to attend them, and to that end he would direct, the night before, that the breakfast should be served at 7 o'clock, so that all might get to the meeting by 8, and it was a pleasant incident in the family life that the breakfast was served by gas light. Then with his wife and three elder children in the carriage, he would start before it was fully light. He would find seats near the platform, where he could enjoy every word of the earnest and moving service of song and praise and sermon. A vast concourse of people assembled at these meetings. Sometimes Mr. McCormick would send his carriage to bring Mr. Moody home. There was a very strong sympathy between these two men of indomitable will, and whenever they were in the same city, they were sure to meet, and there was always strong feeling of mutual respect and admiration. They liked each other, and understood each other well."

Among Mrs. McCormick's own interests in this period was one that was to figure large throughout her life—so large that it must have a bit of space for its beginnings. This was the Woman's Presbyterian Board of Missions of the Northwest.

Several vain efforts had been made to form Chicago women into an auxiliary to Eastern women's foreign missionary societies. But when the suggestion came, from an official of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions, which included Congregationalists and New School Presbyterians, that these women organize an independent society for the West, the response was unanimous. Perhaps it was the independent spirit of the new city, the new region, that spoke. At any rate, on October 27, 1868 fourteen Presbyterian and fourteen Congregational women formed "The Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior." For two years they worked together happily. Then the Old School and the New School divisions of the Presbyterian Church reunited and many changes followed.

At a meeting held in May 1870 at the usual place, the parlors of the Second Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian women announced their withdrawal to form a separate board. There were tears at the ending of a harmonious work fellowship, but there were also understanding and sympathy. In the end it was the Congregational women who withdrew, leaving the familiar meeting place to the Presbyterians. In the same rooms on December 17 of that year the Woman's Presbyterian Board of Missions of the Northwest was organized, and in the same year Philadelphia and New York Presbyterian women organized similarly.

At the time of the Fire this little Chicago organization of women was not a year old. When the flames died down, its accustomed meeting place was ashy ruin. So were the homes of many of its members and the business places of many members' husbands. As for its "particular object"—"to send the gospel to women and children in heathen and foreign lands," a less devoted group might have dismissed this as, at the moment, fantastic. Not so this Board. Undaunted, they made their Friday morning way, some of them over debris, to homes of officers fortunate enough to have homes, and carried on their work.

This Board of the Northwest encountered the same obstacles that beset other early phases of women's work for women. Auxil-

iaries could not be organized without the leaders' actually speaking in public, and to the more conservative Presbyterian ministers this was unrighteous. Mrs. William Blair, telling of "The Beginnings," recalls that Mrs. Rhea, the Board's first Field Secretary, was besought by a clergyman cousin at least "never to speak before a mixed audience." But the Northwest Board pioneers apparently steered their course skilfully. Their policy was, "many small gifts, from self-denial, that we might never decrease our husbands' contributions to the church, and—very small expenses." The two first secretaries, Mrs. G. H. Laffin and Mrs. Blair, sent out hundreds of hand-copied circulars, and the work began steadily to grow.

It was this organization that Mrs. McCormick entered, early and with zeal. Whether or not she was a charter member, joining in 1870 as an absent Chicagoan, is not known, but she was the second treasurer, serving thus one year and thereafter for thirty-four years as vice-president and as honorary vice-president until the women's boards were united with the General Assembly's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. Though she was never an active suffragist, this connection in that day shows her by no means conservative in regard to woman's place in the world. She would always have held warmly that woman's place was in the home, but she would have held too that a capable woman might have several other places as well. At least so her own practice proclaimed.

The treasurer's books, it is supposed, were kept by her own hand. This was the way these women did things—and for that matter there wasn't much else they could do in pre-secretary and pre-typewriter days. In the report for 1872-73 the treasurer's well-arranged presentation shows that during the year the Board had taken in, from auxiliaries in eleven states, \$9,323.58, and had on hand a balance of seven cents.

After the post-Fire period of meeting in parlors, some of the Board husbands told the women that if they expected their work to be permanent, they should have a headquarters and a paid worker or two. The women accepted the advice, and fortunately one of the Board husbands—Cyrus Hall McCormick—provided two rooms. The first meeting was held in headquarters on August 29, 1873, and until his death in 1884 Mr. McCormick gave the Board its rooms rent free.

They were in the McCormick Block at Dearborn and Randolph Streets, and as it happened the entrance was labeled No. 48. For twenty-seven years the Board remained in its first home, which became widely known as Room 48—not only headquarters for this Board but also a place for ministers' meetings and other religious business. When in 1900 it left the McCormick Block, which had passed into other hands, it took its room name with it. At three different addresses before the Board was merged with the other five women's boards of the Presbyterian Church, it had painted its number on the door regardless of floor sequences.

"Room 48" was also for years the heading of a page in the *Interior*, given to the Board without charge by Mr. McCormick, no doubt on the strength of his wife's interest.

The work of the Board steadily grew in grace and in power. And no wonder, since from the first its leaders were among the finest women of Chicago—women of social standing and distinction and of personal initiative. Chicagoans with historical memories will recall some of the names—the first president, Mrs. R. W. Patterson, the beautiful wife of the pastor of Second Presbyterian Church; Mrs. A. H. Hoge, able, devoted president from 1872 to 1885; her daughter, Mrs. Henry Forsyth, who herself became president later; Mrs. John V. Farwell, first treasurer—like Mrs. McCormick, the wife of a successful Chicago business man; Mrs. Albert Keep, wise, active, keen; Mrs. William Blair, gracious, distinguished; and many others.

To these, the Friday morning meetings were a high point of the week. A story is told of a woman visitor to Chicago who, hearing in some church service the announcement of a meeting at Room 48, neglected to note the address. But on Friday she took a car toward the Loop, asking the conductor if he knew where Room 48 was. "No ma'am," he answered, "I don't; but I notice that every Friday morning a lot of ladies get off my car at Wabash Avenue and Randolph and walk west, so I guess if you follow them you'll find it." She did.

Mrs. McCormick was among those who went regularly, at least in the early years. Then and thereafter her home was open to any of the more than seven hundred missionaries who were sent out, and her gifts to and through the Board were on a steadily rising scale.

Despite all the pressure of their interests the McCormicks took occasional periods of recreation. They returned to Avon Springs in 1873, but while Mrs. McCormick and the children stayed there, Mr. McCormick, always in search of more helpful waters, tried Massena Springs too.

It was just after this that Mrs. McCormick and the children had the joy of spending more than two weeks in the house at 40 Fifth Avenue. "Our great pleasure at entering our beautiful home," she wrote to her husband in Chicago, "I can scarcely describe to you. The gas light lent a pleasing effect to the elegance of the apartments and we roved from room to room, filled with delight. . . . We sit at our dining table and seem in a palace with our lofty ceilings & frescoes &c." Then suddenly, the house had to be prepared for a tenant and they moved to the Everett House. But Mrs. McCormick wrote to her husband: "It required a real effort to get to the point of giving up our beautiful home, filled with every luxury that one can desire, but I know we are needed in Chicago. Nothing but *duty* could move me from what is really a *home* for us and the children, the only one we have—but then you cannot be here & we will not be separated."

This nostalgic interval was unexpectedly prolonged for about twelve weeks. With much dentistry for the children (she was devoted to their New York dentist), the care of baby Harold, entertaining relatives, working in the storerooms at 40 Fifth Avenue, arranging disposal of her husband's old clothes and buying needed new things including shirts and stocks for Mr. McCormick—she was busy and clearly told her suffering husband so. As the stay lengthened, she even put the children in school or under tutors—a detail that alarmed Mr. McCormick. Though he did not demand her return and sympathized with her in her cares, he pointed out what *could* be done in Chicago. She wrote him the reassuring word that she was as anxious to come as he was to have her.

The next year the McCormicks spent some time at a health resort of a different type. Mr. McCormick had been ill. For his convalescence he went to Waukesha, Wisconsin, while Mrs. McCormick, to recover from the strain of attending on him, took the children to Bedford Springs, Pennsylvania. Thence they moved to "Our Home on the Hillside," or Dr. James C. Jackson's Health

Resort at Dansville, New York. There after a time the two Cyruses were persuaded to join the others.

It was a strange place, "Our Home on the Hillside," set among the hills of the Finger Lakes region of New York. Mrs. McCormick described it fully in a letter to Cyrus in September of 1874:

"I have had it in my wishes for many months to have my family adopt the methods of living that are practical in Hygienic Institutions. . . .

"I find here a place where every arrangement is made from a health point of view. You retire between eight and nine, rise at six, have such a bath as the doctor directs or none if he thinks best, walk, breakfast at eight, prayers in the parlor (not compulsory). At eleven you have whatever treatment is in your prescription, rest until two, write or do what you choose, at three dinner, after which ride, walk, read, do what you choose.

"The meals are novel. Everything is placed on the table before the doors are open, for breakfast graham porridge, oatmeal porridge, baked or stewed fruits, such as apples, prunes, berries, all most carefully cooked, a kind of graham bread called *gems*, ground rusk. No meat is on the table but you can have it if you ask, also you can have tea and coffee.

"For dinner an abundance of vegetables, beans, peas, tomatoes, potatoes, graham pudding, rusk, fruits of the season, and meat if you want. This is the last *meal of the day*. No salt in anything, or pepper.

"Dr. Jackson, a man of sixty years of age, is the great moving spirit of the place. He lectures in the chapel. He moves around among the inmates, encourages, advises, visits them, is on the field of action at 5 o'clock, eats only one meal a day and that is breakfast. He preached a beautiful sermon yesterday, Sunday, on the *power* of the Holy Spirit.

"The patients lie upon little cots all over the grounds in the shade of the trees. . . . Many wear a wet turban on the head. . . . Mary enters heartily into the methods here, and feels she is so much better *without any food* after the mid-day meal. We all feel so. Will you not try it? . . . Harold is happy on this hillside, walking and swinging in the hammock."

When Mr. McCormick arrived, the provision that the guests

might have meat if they wished, came into use. He scorned the vegetarian diet, and the baskets that carried meals to the McCormicks' cottage contained his usual quota of meat. Evidently the family approved this regime, for a few years later they repeated their visit.

Chapter 9

THE NORTH SIDE

—HOME

THE McCormicks' residence on the West Side in Chicago had been only an interlude, inspired by the Fire. Mr. McCormick had owned a lot on Rush Street on the near North Side since the fifties and held steadily to his favorable opinion of this section, despite the marble fronts and other signs of popularity of the South Side. Now that Chicago had rebuilt, with typical speed and energy, the family was ready to build a home on that lot. In the spring of 1875 they moved from Sheldon Street to one of the new houses that had sprung up on Superior Street, just off Pine Street (now North Michigan Avenue), conveniently near to the scene of coming building activities. A little to the north rose the Water Tower, survivor of the Fire. On the east the Lake pressed far closer than in later years. Less than a block to the west stood the new building of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, to which the McCormicks were presently to return. The house was a high basement brick, with the stairs rising straight from the entrance, parlor and sitting room on the right, a basement dining room. For the first time since her return to Chicago, Mrs. McCormick was, in her own words, to "commence housekeeping." She sent to New York for some of her possessions, but in the main the house had to be furnished.

The family was complete now. At Sheldon Street, the fall before, another son had been born—the second of the "little boys," as for years their mother called Harold and Stanley. The five children were in an interesting variety of stages—Cyrus nearly sixteen, Mary Virginia fourteen, Anita nine, Harold three, and the baby a few months old. Mrs. McCormick's occupation as a mother of young children was at about maximum point, and perhaps it is time to stop and ask what kind of mother she was. That she was a

loving and devoted mother and considered the care of her children's health, education—mental, moral, spiritual—and their happiness a chief part of her life work is abundantly clear. But her problems as a mother of young children were greatly complicated by her status as her husband's right-hand helper. Not that the father was ever other than fond and devoted; but manlike he could more readily entrust them to others when business pressed.

Always loving, solicitous, adoring, the truth is that as an unofficial assistant, almost partner, in her husband's extensive affairs, Mrs. McCormick had less than enough time to be a continuously personally attentive mother; but she made every effort to surround her children with the best influences and to keep in close touch with them. An interesting indication that she succeeded is the fact that one of her sons, looking back down the years, had no memory of the frequent absences that his mother's correspondence plainly shows.

In their early years, all of the children were under the care of tutors and governesses. But their mother made a point of knowing the details of their books and studies. Nurses, governesses, tutors were carefully chosen. And some of these choices were very fortunate. In particular the whole family gained through the employment of Harriot M. Hammond, sister of Mrs. McCormick's great friend Mary Mildred Sullivan. A teacher, a woman of high culture and of rare personal qualities, refined perhaps by her own continuous physical suffering, Miss Hammond was an ideal guide for the two little boys, a substitute mother ever and again for them and for both daughters.

In accordance with the practice of their day, Mr. and Mrs. McCormick brought up their children, especially the two elder ones, rather strictly. Obedience was exacted. There were a good many prohibitions. Sunday, if not exactly blue, was certainly a serious day. This was no particular hardship, however, for the children looked upon church and Sunday school as part of the pattern of life. All the standard virtues were inculcated and youthful misbehavior won the standard punishment. Harold believed that he held the family record on slipper spankings at his mother's hand. Modern views of discipline did not arrive in time to benefit him.

Often, flitting from one occupation to another, Mrs. McCormick would gather a child into her arms for a short period of read-

ing aloud—the book only too often, according to Harold, being the Bible.

After the early period of tutors and governesses, all of the children were sent to private schools, with occasional tutoring intervals; but only the elder daughter was away from home at boarding school for any considerable time. She and Cyrus were the only ones who ever went to public school and Mary's attendance was brief. Cyrus attended the Brown grammar school in Chicago, and in 1874 entered the Central High School—then the only full-course high school in the city. From the Superior Street house Cyrus and Mary walked daily the more than two miles that lay between it and the school on Monroe Street near Halsted.

Separated from his mother at the beginning of his second high school year, Cyrus wrote in detail about his studies—a heavily classical course—and his standing, which was high. His mother wished to see it even higher and he ended as valedictorian of his class. He had pointed comments to make on the school system in that second year. For instance: "Would you believe it! The Chicago Board of Education passed a resolution a few days ago prohibiting the reading of the Bible and the Lord's Prayer in the Public & High Schools. I never heard of such a thing. We don't read the Bible or repeat the Prayer in school now. All we do is sing two or 3 songs." However, he was enthusiastic over the scholastic training that the high school gave him. His letters of that period reflect a quaint combination of school and household cares, for his mother had delegated to him the task of overseeing the canning of fruit for the winter.

That summer of 1875 Mrs. McCormick accompanied her husband on her second Southern trip. Searching as always for healing springs, Mr. McCormick had tried Hot Springs, Arkansas early in the season; in the company of his niece, Amanda Shields, and his daughter Mary Virginia. Though Mary found this "lawless place" pretty unsatisfactory, Mr. McCormick was apparently content with parboiling himself industriously, playing croquet, and chatting with his friend Joseph Medill.

Later the family visited the famous mountain resort at Hot Springs, Virginia. Here young Cyrus left them to return to Chicago for school, but the others crossed the mountains to White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. In this old summer capital of the

South, a place of white pillars and gracious charm, Mr. McCormick took the baths and played his favorite game, croquet; while Mrs. McCormick among other activities joined a group that General Robert D. Lilley conducted to the top of Kate's Mountain. From this resort the family (all but Cyrus) traveled to that spot where Ermina Merick and Nettie McCormick had rested in the first summer of Nettie's marriage—Rockbridge Alum Springs.

Here in 1875 as in 1858 Mrs. McCormick was an out-of-season guest. "The gay people have all flown," she wrote to Cyrus—"The invalids have left for the same reason that they came—for their health—the music has departed from these sylvan groves as well as from the music stand. The light has faded from the sky as well as from these cottage doors and porches; in short, the gloom of an autumnal rain storm is hovering over us, and it seems unwise to remain here. I wish to leave today." She couldn't though, for "Papa wishes to get a contract . . . studied out here in retirement."

After nearly two weeks of Alum Springs came a shorter visit to Lexington, where "the former friends of your papa have evinced a lively regard for their old neighbor, and have flocked to see him . . ." The visitors included professors at the two institutions that share a plateau campus there—Washington and Lee University, at which only a few days before Mr. McCormick had endowed a chair, and Virginia Military Institute. General George Washington Custis Lee, who had succeeded his revered father, General Robert E. Lee, as president of the college, was among the callers. So was Judge John W. Brockenbrough, for many years rector of the Board of Trustees of the University. General Francis Henney Smith, head of the Virginia Military Institute, conducted them over class rooms and barracks, where Mrs. McCormick—always observant and destined to equip many a boy's lodgings—noted the exact contents of each room. "I thought it coarse and hard," she commented to Cyrus, "but the happy look of the boys contradicted the thought."

There was thrilling reminiscence, too. ". . . While driving out of the village past the different farms your papa exclaimed, 'There is the very field where the first public exhibition of my reaping machine took place.' Lo! What a mighty fruitage that effort has borne; and how that low sound has filled the whole earth."

Whether in New York, Chicago, or Europe in the remaining years of the seventies, through all the McCormicks' affairs ran the absorbing care of building and furnishing their home. When Mrs. McCormick corresponded with an architect early in 1874 she said that thus far she had been "the principal mover in the project." What she was thinking of then was a two-story house with basement and mansard roof, to cost preferably not more than \$65,000 or \$75,000. The house that the family entered late in 1879 had three stories, with basement and mansard roof and tower, and had cost about \$175,000. Mrs. McCormick's eager plan to "commence next month" and to have a house by the end of a year was halted by Mr. McCormick's "pressure of business."

By the fall of 1876, however, the work was under way with Cudell and Blumenthal, Chicago architects, in charge. Lake Superior red sandstone was chosen as the material, plans were discussed, re-discussed, finally agreed upon for a house in the style of the late Renaissance. Foundations began to be sunk, walls to rise. For decisions on all the endless details from sewer pipes and air ducts to Oriental rugs, antique tapestries, books, and paintings, the responsibility was shared. Husband and wife pored together over plans, joined in interviewing architects, builders, decorators, experts of various other kinds, and when separated corresponded in great detail about their findings. Concerning these and other matters Mr. McCormick exclaimed in comment on a letter of hers, "Are our troubles about these things not severe!" It was Mr. McCormick who worked over the inside design, redoing it to secure larger spacing. He was responsible, too, for the broad stairway, figuring out relation of tread and riser with exact mathematical precision to give greater ease than the plan provided. He achieved a stairway that swept up with a magnificent disregard of space consumed—a stairway of unusual beauty.

To Mrs. McCormick fell the heavier end of responsibility for overseeing the work—a task for which she was eminently fitted in force of character, tact, an almost appalling thoroughness, and her characteristic zest for detail. Every once in a while there is a casual disclosure of her decisive force in the negotiations. "It was a tough struggle," she wrote to Cyrus Junior, "to get papa to relinquish Pottier & Stimus but he has done it—and has come to Herter

just as I believed—and to the advantage of our house in *workmanship, price & taste*.”

When the absorbing question was interior decoration and furnishings, the McCormicks spent long periods in New York in consultations. Eventually decision fell on a variety of woodwork in the different rooms—mahogany, rosewood, satinwood, ebonized wood inlaid with tin, and a corresponding range of furniture, hangings, wall coverings. But much time was to pass before the house became home.

Meantime, in the years preceding completion of the house there was an urgent problem to be solved for Cyrus Junior—solved by his mother.

Naturally young Cyrus wished to go to college and his mother was enthusiastically for the project—possibly its originator. As early as 1873 she corresponded with an officer of the College of New Jersey—at Princeton—about the best age to enter. The choice was an obvious one, for this school was an outstanding Presbyterian institution and its president, Dr. James W. McCosh, only a few years from Scotland, was an outstanding Presbyterian whom the McCormicks knew—a tall, handsome, broad shouldered “man of granite,” a scholar and teacher of high order and of views more liberal than those of some of the McCormicks’ favorites. Shortly after Cyrus was graduated from high school in 1877 plans were made, his room was engaged—all seemed clear. But in that summer he showed only too well his fitness for his father’s business. At his mother’s suggestion the boy had made his first trip abroad, crossing in the company of eminent ministers, particularly Dr. Francis L. Patton of the Seminary, who were bound for a Pan-Presbyterian gathering in Scotland. His father took the opportunity to entrust him with business errands, including an interview with the elder Morgan—Junius S.—which the youth executed to his parents’ great satisfaction. On all sides he won approval. It became evident to Mr. McCormick, beyond his highest hopes, that Cyrus could—and therefore should—relieve him of heavy burdens.

On September 10, the second day before college was to open, Mr. McCormick “brought up all manner of objections to his going, and placed every obstacle in the way.” The debate (Mrs. McCormick records) continued the next day with Mr. McCor-

mick claiming that Cyrus had enough education to do business—more than his father had—that college would “effeminate” him, that “it was not the proper thing for Cyrus to live the ease of college life while he did the work &c.” Mrs. McCormick argued in reply that Cyrus would make a far better business man and a more effective citizen if he had a mind disciplined by college study and that the business would not suffer by a further delay in Cyrus’s entering it.

Though her husband had not given in, Mrs. McCormick told Cyrus to have his trunk packed anyhow. It did not move. There was more debate, both sides holding fast. By the 17th Mrs. McCormick was “willing to yield the sentiment of diplomas & degrees” but not “the question of *more education*.” Presently the two decided that each should write a letter to President McCosh setting forth his or her views. This matter was in hand when “who should come in but Dr. McCosh himself. We read our letters to him mine first whereupon he presented in clear & forcible language the very arguments which I had used. . . .”

He ended by proposing to take Cyrus to Princeton with him the next day. “All this seemed irresistible to my husband,” Mrs. McCormick told her journal, “and what did not seem to him conclusive in my reasoning he yielded to Dr. McCosh & said, ‘Very well—he may go.’”

The next morning Dr. McCosh came back with a plan for a special course, and evidently a shortened one, for the young man’s mother said, “I was delighted at the prospect, and felt quite ready to yield the question of 4 years.” Though she does not say so explicitly it was probably she who first proposed, in harmony with her yielding “the sentiment of diplomas and degrees,” a shortened course. This was the recollection in later years of her son Cyrus.

The outcome was an arrangement whereby Cyrus, well ahead of the entrance requirements, carried a heavy special course and won a special diploma in 1879 which ranked him with that class. His father as well as his mother took pride in the youth’s success.

A trip abroad in 1878, involving the whole family, marked a turning point in Mrs. McCormick’s life, bringing a sharp increase in her responsibilities. It was primarily a business trip to exhibit the reaper at the Paris Exhibition of 1878 and to solve troublesome problems in the foreign reaper business. At first Cyrus Junior was

scheduled to go alone. But his father sniffed the smoke of battle and felt drawn toward going.

As he neared decision, he made it known that he desired his wife's company, but wished to leave the younger children at home. Unwilling to accept this arrangement Mrs. McCormick went through a distressing period of uncertainty and struggle. Some of her turmoil is shown in her letters to Cyrus at Princeton. She had shrunk in the first place from sending Cyrus "like a lamb among wolves to that most dangerous and gilded pathway to destruction!" Then, on the question of leaving the younger children: ". . . here is my great trouble—papa wants Anita, Harold and Baby left behind. If I had a mother or a sister to leave them with I would do so—but how could I go off and feel easy in leaving them in a haphazard way in this country.

"I do ask for *light* on this difficult subject—and I know I shall be guided in the right way. . . . I believe it will end in all going in July—but don't know."

It did end much as she expected. The family all crossed, but in instalments—young Cyrus first, charged with business instructions; then Mrs. McCormick with all the other children, and finally Mr. McCormick.

Mrs. McCormick, who was moved to go partly on physicians' orders, went at once to the Continent with her elder daughter, now called Virginia, on a health quest. The children, meantime, with the beloved family friend and teacher, Harriot Hammond, were established at Ramsgate, England, in a house high on chalk cliffs above the sea.

In spite of concern over the reaper problems and what husband and son were doing about them, Mrs. McCormick appears to have had an enjoyable vacation. Her physician had advised her to change her habits and have "less mental care," and she tried to obey. Swinging around through Switzerland and the Tyrol, she settled for a time at St. Moritz in the Engadine, and wrote to Cyrus about their "air cure":

"Virginia and I walk on the mountain sides a great deal and on the gentler slopes—no croquet.

"In fine weather I never experienced such a sensation of *lightness*—*no trouble* to walk for a few miles—so bracing is this cool dry air."

At that distance, with that perspective, she had a clear view on the business problems at home and their unfortunate effects on the family's life. She wrote to her husband late in August:

"I confess I know not what is best *for me*. Let the physician decide that. I am willing to abide by whatever you and he together say should be done. One thing I know, the life we lead at home such as last winter & other winters is not good for either *you*, or the children's welfare—(not necessarily physical) or my welfare in which I include my physical and mental well being.

"The habits of business, always, and at all times & in all places, leaves little room for any family life, such as I see it in well regulated families; or for good sleeping, or eating in quiet—or with any regularity as to the family having any regard for meeting each other at any regular times around the family board."

She was referring to the arrangement whereby all the foreign business was carried by Mr. McCormick himself rather than by the firm, his home thus being to that considerable extent his office. This was a rare instance, so far as her correspondence shows, of protest against the intrusion of business into her home province; it was purposeful, and in large part as a result of her persuasions the plan was changed. After their return home the foreign business was a concern of the firm.

While mother and daughter were enjoying the Swiss mountain air, Cyrus and his father were going about together. Before the father's arrival the son had exhibited the binder in Holland, though without winning first place, and had got ready for the trials to be held at Bristol by the Royal Agricultural Society. His father accompanied him there and the two had the joy of seeing the binder win the gold medal.

Early in August they learned from Paris that it had been "officially announced privately that Father had the Grand Prize—the only one in department of reaping, mowing and binding machines." But it was soon known that the distribution of Exposition prizes was postponed until October 21—a delay that as Mr. McCormick said "knocked everything into a cocked hat." Together they traveled to Paris, visited the Exposition and saw a number of people, and on the advice of Mr. McCormick's physician went on to Aix-la-Chapelle, where the warm sulphur baths and billiards interspersed with work occupied them pleasantly.

Later the four met in Paris, while the younger children still lingered at Ramsgate.

As the time approached for Cyrus to return to Princeton, his father revived the thought of a dual business and study program for him instead of Princeton. Cyrus raised the alarm in a letter to his mother and in the outcome her arguments again prevailed. The young man though delayed left in time to catch up with his classes. Meantime, his parents settled down to await the great days of late October, bringing over the rest of the family to join them in the Hôtel du Jardin across from the Garden of the Tuileries.

On the evening of October 20 at the residence of the Minister of Agriculture Mr. McCormick, since 1867 a chevalier of the Legion of Honor, received his promotion to the rank of officer. The next day he was part of the brilliant procession that filed into the Palace of Industry for the ceremonies of awarding the Exhibition prizes. But let Mrs. McCormick tell it, as she did to Cyrus Junior:

"I take a moment in the lull between the grand ceremonies of the morning and the grand fireworks tonight to tell you something about the distribution of prizes at the Palace of Industry at 12 o'clock today.

"After a season of some preparation we were *all* in the building at 12 o'clock punctually, papa being honored with an invitation to join the cortège. The vast building was filled to its utmost and the costumes were brilliant—while uniforms and orders of all kinds shone with dazzling splendor. The Prince of Wales & the Marshall led the cortège—and all that music, & the trappings of Royalty & the éclat of an assemblage of genius—of talent in every walk of life—in letters, in arts, in science, and in the industries could lend was present on this occasion. After Addresses by the President Marshall & by the Minister of Agriculture the presidents of the groups and the Commissions of the several countries received the medals in baskets to hand to the exhibitors. Mr. McC. sent papa his grand Prix—a beautiful gold medal. . . ." ("Mr. McC." was the American Commissioner to the Paris Exposition—himself a McCormick, a distant cousin of the inventor. He was Richard Cunningham McCormick, who at one time in his career had been Territorial Governor of Arizona.)

Mrs. McCormick and her two daughters, but not her husband,

attended the grand fête at Versailles that night. "There were 25,000 invitations," wrote Mrs. McCormick. "It was a grand collection of all the nations of the earth. But the crowd was *so great* that locomotion was utterly arrested—It became a thing impossible. The mass of human beings was something appalling as they attempted to pass through doors from one room to another. Women fainted—& cried. Men were dripping with perspiration & red with exertion. It became a well-dressed mob. A thousand times I was sorry I went."

Then came calamity. The very next day Mr. McCormick developed a carbuncle on the back of his neck so severe that he had to have it deeply lanced (an experience that he bravely endured without an anesthetic). It was a time of severe strain to Mrs. McCormick. Her husband was in the care of a physician whom she considered "the best on the Continent"—Dr. C. E. Brown-Séquard; but his life was in danger and though there were nursing attendants, she had much to do with actual care and her strength was diminished by confinement to the hotel suite.

When the worst was over she was harassed with concern over the interruption in the children's schooling. They were all at rather loose ends. Virginia helped her mother about the invalid and helped him with his work when work became possible. Anita, developing a sense of responsibility for her little brothers, used to take them into the Garden of the Tuileries, and when a dismal Christmas threatened, persuaded her mother to let her shop for the children—a rapturous experience, buying French toys to her heart's content and keeping Santa Claus illusions alive in the little boys.

Mr. McCormick's nerves, unstrung by pain and distress over his inability to attend to business, made the employment of tutors difficult. Finally, however, Mrs. McCormick was able to provide French tutors for the little boys and a history master at discreet hours for Virginia and Anita. In Anita's interest she made a still more drastic move. Though she was eager to give her daughter French in the best way, she was not willing to turn her over to a French school and she would not even consider subjecting her to the Catholic influence of a convent. She found in Neuilly a French pension school conducted by an Englishwoman, and the girl went there for the first time in a sense on her own. Though

she felt a shock of aloneness in this alien-speaking place of strangers, Anita soon liked it all—the teachers, their dog, long walks in the fields, the big loaf of bread on a table from which slices were cut. Then there were the week-end trips to Paris and the family, in a horse car, presumably in the care of the conductor, and the sense of deliciousness as she stood out on the front platform and traveled through magical Paris. It was a good solution and her mother was content with it.

Meantime the responsibility for business decisions rested on Mrs. McCormick's shoulders far more heavily than before. In the long, slow weeks of convalescence Mr. McCormick was able, in spite of weakness, to think about his pressing problems, but could not focus his thoughts in decisions.

Day after day, with only occasional short walks for air even after the invalid was able to be out, they spent in their apartment, consulting with solicitors, poring over correspondence, Mrs. McCormick and Virginia writing endlessly. Resolutely, Mr. McCormick labored over his papers, sitting with a band running from the back of the armchair around his forehead as a support. But it was for his wife to help him to the deciding words.

The problems were serious—two of them, in particular. One was what the family referred to as the Waite-Burnell case. Mr. McCormick's representative in England, Otis S. Gage, had without his consent placed the business of selling in the hands of the firm of Waite, Burnell & Company. Mr. McCormick refused to accept the contract, dismissed Gage, and Waite-Burnell declined to accept the refusal. Gage threatened suit if Mr. McCormick should cross into England. There was a difficult matter of commissions to adjust, and Judah P. Benjamin, once member of the Cabinet in the Confederacy and now a leading lawyer in England, was called in to aid. "It is one of the most intricate quarrels," Mrs. McCormick wrote to her son, explaining those legal complications clearly.

"... Our solicitors," she said, "have *insisted* that unless we *firmly* stood to requiring in the new agreement, W. B. & Co. *not* to pay the improper commission of 30 shillings to Gage, we would certainly have a lawsuit with Gage, and the only way to lift ourselves out of the entanglement with G. was to do it through the contract with W. B. & Co. This is Mr. Benjamin's opinion and

he has a clear head and the best of judgment, and *with* the solicitors I have stood firmly and resisted all settlements with W. B. which did not include this point, and I do believe I shall prevail in the end. Papa would have given in to W. B. & Co. and risked the suit had not his solicitors and I kept him back. Mr. Rawlins in our parlor said, 'Mrs. McC. *sees the point* and I hope she will insist upon it, for we shall.' "

All this was tied up with the long-standing difficulties between Cyrus and Leander McCormick. There had been clashes between these two brothers throughout their association in business. Even William, who had died in 1865, had sometimes joined with the younger in objections to their older brother's course. They had felt the weight of his dominance and had on occasions thought they had responsibilities on the one hand and rewards on the other in unfair relation to his. There was trouble whenever a contract under which Cyrus and Leander worked was about to end.

The co-partnership which had existed between them was due to expire August 1, 1879. And the rumbles of trouble were loud and frequent. At issue was the adjustment of the foreign business, which thus far was the province of Cyrus rather than of the firm. Believing that the foreign sales increased values at home, the elder wished the firm to pay more than the mere cost of production for machines sold abroad; but Leander objected. There was a constant question whether Leander, in charge of manufacturing, would produce in sufficient quantities to match the contracts.

Stronger than any of this was the pull between the two over the place in the business of the eldest son in each family. Leander was dissatisfied with the small share held by his son Robert Hall. The son was dissatisfied. Cyrus Junior meantime, having finished his college course, was ready to enter the hereditary business fully and his father was determined to give him a responsible place. Moreover, he preferred to have his nephew out altogether. Loyal employees in Chicago faithfully relayed the news of the activities of Leander and son to the McCormicks in Paris, even to the threats of the two that they might establish a factory of their own. The possibility of either side's selling out to the other was agitated, but neither would accept the other's offer.

No wonder that, with all this going on, Mrs. McCormick should

"feel that our irons are burning in Chicago" and should be eager to get off soon.

The Burnell matter dragged. The contract was pending, was written but not signed, Gage was making difficulties, one person after another was blocking the wheels. But there were pleasures. As spring advanced Mrs. McCormick wrote: "We are taking more open air. I just take papa out and V. and we walk in the pleasant garden opposite," and again, "I am going to take papa now, and go across the street and walk in that lovely walk—the high rampart I mean—skirting the east end of the garden of the Tuileries—overlooking the Place de la Concorde. It is so pretty there—not that a leaf is yet to be seen—but it is *day* there and so quiet—and these two things together with the bright moving panorama before the eyes, the world passing through the Place de la Concorde—makes it very enjoyable. How thankful I am for dry weather—after such a winter of Paris rain."

Meantime there was another interest, shopping for fine things to decorate the mansion that was then being pushed toward completion in Chicago. They went—father, mother, and now and again the children—to Marcotte, the chosen decorator, to buy carpets, brocades, furniture, vases, and above all the old tapestries for the dining room which was to be perhaps the chief glory of the house.

Occasionally after Mr. McCormick's nerves were steady enough to bear their absence, Mrs. McCormick took Virginia on brief flights to see pictures or museums or historic spots or the acting of Sarah Bernhardt, or sent her with other company to concerts and opera and a "superb mass at Notre Dame led by Gounod himself."

Early in April, preparations began for the crossing to England and the return home. Urgent, anxious messages kept coming from the Chicago office; only considerations of Mr. McCormick's lack of strength and the long-drawn-out Gage-Burnell matter held them. Finally, late in the month, the threat of suit in England was lifted, and after a stiff effort Mrs. McCormick got her family off and into London. There personal conferences began in which Mrs. McCormick was obviously a principal. "Papa is very dependent now on the *will* of another. He expects and looks for me to make

the decisions and then execute them. . . . He cannot walk well and shows more feebleness in that than in anything else. . . . He cannot now be looked to for any independent action. In the next three months *important decisions* in the business have to be made and I look to you for help."

As a matter of fact, Mr. McCormick made a far better recovery than these words suggest, but this was the burden that his wife carried during the winter and early spring.

Finally the contract was signed and in mid-May the McCormicks embarked for home. At the steamer Mr. McCormick received notice of an honor which he said touched him more deeply than any previous honor of his life—his unanimous election as a correspondent of the Académie des Sciences de l'Institut de France in "recognition of the fact that he had done more than any other living man for the cause of agriculture in the world."

Though Mr. McCormick had regained a measure of health he had come home weakened. He was not again able to carry the full load of his responsibilities and interests. For one thing, he gave up his political cares, though even in the year of his return there was a thought of his running for the national vice presidency—a thought to which his wife was strongly opposed. She wrote to him:

"My dear husband

"From Cyrus I learn *simply* that you start to Cincinnati tonight, and that some people are unwise enough to try to induce you to place yourself prominently at Cincinnati. I regret this, because I feel that you have too good a position as benefactor of your race to risk anything whatever in other fields.

"I regret that this whisper in your ear has had any influence over you. You know men, and you know they want your money and will *give you nothing*. You have an enviable position, and I ask you to be content with that."

The summer and autumn months of 1879 were crowded with business and unsettled as well. In Chicago the affairs of the brothers were in negotiation. In New York purchases were to be completed for the new house, and the sale of the Fifth Avenue home was in process. Consequently Mr. and Mrs. McCormick traveled to and from Chicago and New York.

For Mrs. McCormick there was a sad personal interruption. In early November Eldridge and Mary Fowler's only son, Melzar, twenty years old, died after a brief illness in a New Jersey school. On getting the word Mrs. McCormick and Cyrus went at once from New York to the stricken parents. Mary Fowler had arrived from her home at Bay City, Michigan only three hours before her son's death; Eldridge, away from home, not until afterward. To both Mrs. McCormick's swift, sympathetic response was a deep comfort. Brother and sister were always as close as the circumstances of their lives permitted, and Mrs. McCormick had adopted Mary Fowler as a sister. To Eldridge the loss of his son was not only a profound grief but a keen disappointment. For the young man was sharing in his father's business interests, lumber and timberlands, and the father looked forward to the developing association.

Back in New York, Mrs. McCormick plunged again into her husband's business. Through the wise efforts of a mediator, the trouble between the McCormick brothers was adjusted and a new arrangement was made almost on schedule date. "C.H. and L.J. McCormick" was replaced by a stock company, the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. Leander and Robert Hall McCormick were to own a quarter of the stock, Cyrus McCormick three quarters.

The elder brother was president, the other vice president and superintendent of the manufacturing department on a five-year contract. Though each of the brothers wished his son to be secretary, at the tactful suggestion of young Cyrus a third person was chosen. Cyrus reflected that meantime he could learn more of the business. Hall became assistant superintendent.

Late in November the great house on Rush Street was near enough to completion to warrant sending the three younger children home to it from New York. At least they arrived when only one upstairs room was dry enough to sleep in, when masons and plaster and the dust from fitting parquetry floors prevailed. No doubt the children loved it as part of the thrill of belonging in this impressive mansion and gave the place an exhaustive inspection. One of them recalled excitement over the marvel of a telephone in a little closet of its own. The elder daughter remained in a boarding school in New York. But in mid-December Mr. and Mrs.

McCormick returned—a homecoming that represented the climax of a long effort. Though not all details were finished, the family was established at home. As they had been absent for weeks, one imagines them making a grand tour of the rooms, the master of the new mansion probably in a wheel chair, the children joining the inspecting party. At any rate if they made the rounds, this is what they saw, all fresh from the hands of the decorators:

The great west doorway, at the top of the stone steps, opened on a large hall of subtly varied proportions, widening almost to reception room width. Rooms opened hospitably on either side through sliding doors. A fireplace, gleaming with brass, closed the far end. The fine stairs mounted to the left. The hall woodwork was oak with frescoed panels, background for bronze statuary.

All the principal rooms connected—a pleasant provision for easy hospitality. At the left of the hall the reception room opened into the drawing room, the maple and gilt woodwork and furnishings of the first, with its salmon pink hangings embroidered in blue, blending with the satinwood, rosewood, and soft-toned tapestry of the larger room. In these two rooms hung the three Cabanel portraits—Mr. and Mrs. McCormick, painted in 1867, and Virginia in 1878. Cabinets held many European gleanings of glass and porcelain, of which the most prized was the Sèvres vase bestowed on Mr. McCormick at the 1878 Exposition.

On the other side of the hall were ranged Mr. McCormick's "private room"—his office, fitted carefully for his comfort; the library, housing in a setting of ebony with gleaming tin inlay the luxuriously bound books chosen in New York and London; and the great dining room. Here mahogany formed the background for a wainscoting with decorated frieze on gold ground and for the panels of antique tapestry, while in the ceiling various emblems of Mr. McCormick's career—a reaper, sheaves of grain, the Cross of the Legion of Honor, were blended; and his coat-of-arms appeared over the fireplace. A schoolroom and the butler's pantry completed the first floor.

All the rooms on the second floor connected, cunningly, through a series of bathrooms and closets and dressing rooms. Here, as below, there was a carefully arranged variety in finish and decoration in woods and fabrics.

The feature of the third floor was the great ballroom in its

center, fitted with a well equipped stage—the scene of the musicale that was to be given in May, 1880 in honor of the eldest son's majority, when Chicago society inspected the new mansion from top to bottom.

Another house was among the special interests of the last years of Mr. McCormick's life—the country house on the land at Richfield Springs which he had owned since 1871—owned and cherished. For though there had been much question whether after the return to Chicago he would carry out his original intention of building, he never ceased to be ardently interested in the improvement of the grounds. He spent much time and money on plantings and particularly on his precious arbor-vitae hedge. He made an orchard flourish on land redeemed from wild growth and gophers. When at last he decided to build—to have the comfort of a home near those springs and in that air—Mrs. McCormick as in the Rush Street house took much responsibility with architects, contractors, plumbers, decorators, and decisions. The house was finished in 1881 and the name Clayton Lodge, in honor of its mistress' childhood home, was carved in stone over the main entrance. Approached by a driveway for which young Cyrus hauled rough stones, the house still stands, battered but gallant on the windswept brow of a hill, commanding a beautiful view of hills and lakes through vistas of trees that Mrs. McCormick devotedly tended.

Mr. McCormick was to enjoy some pleasant days there—sitting and reading with his wife on the broad piazza looking out over lake and hills; or playing croquet with his eldest son or his daughters; zestfully superintending the care of those extensive grounds; driving down to the village for a chat with friends or on Sundays to the red brick Presbyterian Church, where in these later years his wheel chair was rolled to the head of the aisle and stood next the family pew; and regularly seeking relief for his ills in the sulphur waters of the springs. It was for the same afflicting reasons that he went twice, even in the eighties, to western springs—Eureka Springs, Arkansas in 1882 and Hot Springs, Arkansas the following year. None of his family was with him at Eureka Springs and he found it “unattractive and lonely.” At Hot Springs wife, children, nieces joined him at various times in seeking benefit from the water.

Though neither this nor any other treatment restored his health,

he did not come by any means to the point of retirement. His work was more difficult for him and he did less of it, entrusting more responsibility to his wife and son, but he carried on.

His final illness was of no more than two weeks' duration, and after the first sinking on April 30, 1884 he rallied more than once. Only on the 11th of May was the illness considered hopeless. On that morning—for the last time perfectly conscious—he took leave of his family.

Mrs. McCormick and her son Cyrus, in the *Memoir* that they prepared the following year, told of those moments: "Taking the hand of each of his children, he murmured, 'Dear one,'—then looking at all of them, he said, 'My dear children, my sweet children.' Finally taking the hand of his wife, he said fervently, 'Dearest of all—and dearest to all.'

"One of those near him said, 'Do you wish anything?' With great eagerness he replied, 'I want nothing now but heaven—heaven before.'" Then, in reply to a suggestion from his wife, while his family knelt beside him, he led the last religious service as the head of his family, commending himself and his dear ones to God. The prayer was followed by a hymn—his favorite hymn, "O Thou, in whose presence my soul takes delight"—in which the dying man joined with clear, strong voice. As the hymn ended he sang again the last line of the second verse, changing "Or alone in the wilderness rove" to "Or alone in the wilderness rest!"

On the morning of May 13 in a still gray, misty dawn he died.

PART III
AT THE HELM

Chapter 10

HEAD OF THE FAMILY

MRS. McCORMICK was not of those who lock up their grief. Without thrusting it upon others, she apparently found comfort in speaking of the family's great loss and in reminiscence of her husband's looks and ways. In accordance with the custom of the day, she went into the deepest mourning—heavy crape dresses, crape bonnets with heavy veils. After a time, on the solicitation of a daughter, she laid aside the veils though not the black, and in her later life grays and lavenders mingled with black and white. It was a heavily draped figure, however, that impressed itself on the thought of her little boys.

It had been a good marriage. If the worldly considerations weighed heavier on Mr. McCormick's side of the scale, formal education and culture were heavier on hers. There were community of interest, mutual devotion, mutual dependence. The wife made the pattern of her life conform to her husband's to perhaps an unusual degree; and it would be idle to speculate whether she felt, as the passing years filled with many and varied opportunities, that natural interests of hers had gone unsatisfied. Early, there were moments of wistfulness; in a journal entry of 1862 she wrote:

"Oh why look the eyes wistfully to the paths of science, of literature, of accomplishment—of music—of art—of Society? Heart, knowest thou not that . . . they look *so* inviting, but fail to satisfy *all* the wants of the Soul? But thou mayest pursue them reasonably & as opportunity offers. . . . The guiding of two pure minds (as yet) should tax thy powers: the making of home delightful for the best of earth *should* be thy first & best joy: and indeed, oh! my Heavenly Father! if I know my own heart, *it is! Usefulness* is the *great thing* in life, after all. To do something for others leaves a sweeter odor than a life of pleasure."

On the face of it, a small town girl of unusual possibilities married a man of wealth and position. But she married into more than the normal responsibility of a woman of wealth. She became not only mistress of a great house, but also consultant and adviser in Mr. McCormick's affairs and no doubt a leading influence in the broadening of his philanthropies.

To be sure there were difficulties. For all his excellences, Mr. McCormick could hardly have been an easy man to live with. His enormous capacity for work, his intense absorption in the reaper business were not conducive to a placid home life. Besides, he was very exacting. His immaculate appearance testified to this so far as he himself and his valets were concerned; and with his own boundless energy on the one hand and the pain and limitation of his later years on the other he was not the essence of patience. There were many clashes between him and his attendants for his wife's tact to soften; and his imperious temperament must have given even her some bad moments. A journal entry in 1866 tells of her tears on one distressing occasion. "It has rained all day and my tears have fallen all day—and *how* bitter tears they were. *How* my heart has ached. It all arose from conversation before I got up—at which time I had administered to me sharp rebuke." This year for the first time Mrs. McCormick mentions Mr. McCormick's lying down after dinner to sleep "all the evening"—a practice that became a habit. He would often sit up "after his nap . . . until 1 o'clock, writing &c." Perhaps this was disheartening to her. At any rate, there is depression in her journals of this period—a depression possibly owing to a dimming of the rosy hue of her romance and certainly deepened by her trying illnesses.

As for the twenty-six years' difference in their ages, these had less meaning than might have been supposed. Except in the privacy of their room, Mrs. McCormick habitually addressed her husband as "Mr. McCormick" and she deferred to him. But she was of a serious turn and she had taken on with whole heart and mind her husband's large concerns; so that the gap of years was not a gap of interests.

A pleasant light on the means of keeping the marriage smooth is shed by a bit of Mrs. McCormick's writing on a folded slip of paper pinned together and tucked away. It reads:

"If either makes an abrupt reply or charge, the other is not to reply in the same strain but to direct the attention calmly to its spirit and effect, & to the real point involved.

"May 13, 65

"C. & N."

Now the partnership was over. And though there was time for grief, there was none for mourning with folded hands in Mrs. McCormick's widowhood. She entered at once on a complexity of responsibilities that, if not new, at least had taken on new weight and gravity. In the past she had carried responsibility for many aspects of business and benevolences, as well as for her household and family relationships along with her husband and latterly with a shoulder under part of his load. But she was to learn and to feel the different situation of one who was director and head.

For that was the situation in the following years, though Cyrus her son stood valiantly at her side. Cyrus was a serious, dependable young man, already well trained by five years' service as his father's secretary and assistant and with a natural interest in the business as his destiny; but he was just twenty-five and more accustomed to obedience than to initiative.

On the side of personal life there was the responsibility for four younger children, whose futures were by no means determined—the elder daughter, now twenty-three, gifted and attractive, devout, but already in shadowed health; the younger, also gifted, charming, high-spirited, independent of mind and still not eighteen; and the two whom their mother always called the "little boys," twelve and nine and a half. Within the first year after the father's death the shadow had deepened over the elder daughter's mental health, bringing to the mother a tragic care and grief that never lifted. Through the rest of her life she was to devote endless time and effort to the choice of places for her daughter's residence (for the doctors would not permit her to live at home), and to the trial of every available scientific aid.

On a torn sheet among her papers are these poignant words written in her hand:

"May 10 '85

"Within this year what sad things have come into our lives—

"We have lost our head—husband & father We have lost a dear one, a dear, dear one. We have seen a dear one suffer the illness we have tried to avert.

"We have felt the growing disability to hear the sweet voice of our beloved ones."

Her mastery over this last affliction—her deafness—was one of the most amazing things in her life. "Ear trouble" began to manifest itself in the sixties; between that time and the writing of the touching line just quoted she had consulted leading aurists in the United States and Europe, in vain. Her family began to be aware of her deafness as a serious limitation in the late seventies, when they could no longer penetrate her hearing without aid. At first she relied on a small, cuplike device; later, after trying various instruments, she settled on a long tube that amplified sounds. The modern devices that aid hearing so inconspicuously were not yet available when she first needed help (for that matter they never served her well), and she had to deal with the self-consciousness of being observed. That she did deal with it triumphantly there were hundreds to testify. Though she did not like the tube, she grew into using it so simply that only an occasional shy person felt embarrassment. Even when the trouble had deepened far on the way toward total deafness—with the continuance of distressing sounds in her ears which had been present for years—she threw her tube over all walls. Prayers were made through the tube; causes by the hundred were presented through it; with its aid dinner conversations were directed by the hostess.

Occasionally, but not often, Mrs. McCormick wrote or spoke wistfully about this trouble ("How precious is the sense of hearing"); at other times she pointed out that deafness gave her time to think, or saved her from hearing "mean" things; but for the most part she disregarded it so completely, except for the obviousness of the tube, that one of those closest to her in world causes could say years later "I had forgotten she was deaf."

The business responsibilities that Mrs. McCormick shouldered with the aid of her son and a little later the sustaining help and advice of her brother, Eldridge Fowler, had become vast in her husband's hands.

Mr. McCormick left an estate of ten millions. He was the head

of a business that employed some eighteen hundred men and was manufacturing agricultural implements for a world market. He had, besides, extensive investments in mines, railroads, and other enterprises. Far more to his advantage, he had large real estate holdings, chiefly in Chicago. For the administration of this estate his will appointed his wife and his eldest son executors. The estate was to remain undivided for five years.

Though the reaper business was prosperous when Mr. McCormick left it, this was a period of intense competition. Half a dozen leading reaper manufacturers contended for business, for new inventions, for the maintenance of their patents. It was a warfare that grew in intensity until the formation of the International Harvester Company in 1902. Cyrus Junior, like his father, worked in a wide range, going to and fro about lawsuits over patents, supervising field tests as he had done before, as well as holding up his end in the office. His mother's relation was first of all to him, then to the heads of the company, and occasionally to competitors. She was the person consulted, whose judgment entered into major decisions, whose word was accepted as authoritative. And never in all the business letters to her has there been observed the faintest inclination to explain mechanical or financial matters with the patient condescension of men talking to the average woman. For she understood—and they knew she understood—the multitudinous mechanical details of manufacturing and operating reapers and mowers.

She had been living with machines for twenty-six years.

Certainly the men at the works knew that she understood the reaper business. She used to go over there at intervals and with the superintendent's escort visit one department after another, greeting the workers, asking penetrating questions, noticing and understanding everything. Sometimes action followed. For instance, she observed that hard wood lumber scrap was used in making crates and that it took extra effort to drive nails in this wood. She inquired if there was economy in its use and on finding there was none, took steps to have it discontinued. In later years, the men who had talked with her on these visits treasured their memories. Those were "red letter days," they said.

It is perhaps a good place to consider, briefly, what manner of woman this was who now took the center of a not inconsiderable

stage. Rather tall, about five feet seven inches, she was finely proportioned and had an extraordinarily supple grace of bearing. Her walk was a sort of floating onward movement. Many an admirer treasures a memory of her, descending the stairway "like a queen," in some long, sweeping gown, to greet formal guests—grand dame from head to foot—or in a more intimate approach welcoming with outstretched hands the waiting representative of a favorite cause. When she entered a room, others were aware that a personality had entered. If a single word had to be chosen to describe her manner and bearing, that word would be "gracious."

She had beauty. Her features were clear-cut, well-balanced. The marble bust of her, made when she was about thirty, preserves the strong, fine outline of the nose, the delicate yet ample modeling of the chin. Her mouth, rather full-lipped in youth, had an unusual look of being tucked in at the corners. Her eyes, of a singular brown with purplish shades, were liquid, luminous. Slightly curling dark brown hair framed her face. The hair was graying a little now and worn in a soft twist on the crown, with a parting on the left side. The white forehead and rosy cheeks of youth were still evident in her soft, well cared-for skin. And over and above all there was a sweet radiance of expression that was beauty in itself.

Without display of energy, she conveyed an impression of great vitality in the quickness of her movements, her readiness in speech, her eagerness of response. There was a daintiness about her but no look of delicacy or frailness. She was essentially strong. She had a venturesome strain too. Instances were remembered of her climbing on buildings at heights which few women would scale; at Olivet Institute and at McCormick Theological Seminary it was to observe the progress of work on a building in which she was deeply interested. At the Seminary the ladder climbing was at night, by the light of a lantern held by a professor. At her own house she often climbed ladders while building was going on and once even walked along the third-floor ledge to enter a room where a rebellious maid had locked herself in.

Outstanding mental characteristics were a phenomenal memory, an enormous capacity for detail, a power of penetration to the essentials in any situation, a broad grasp. All the movements of her mind as well as her body were swift—that is, those operations of mind concerned with perception and understanding. It was not

always so where will was concerned. "She did not possess instant decision of character," wrote Dr. W. C. Gray, editor of the *Interior*, "was prone to hesitate, but when she had chosen her course she was firm in a high degree." She did not have a keen sense of time, either. People waited and she herself did things in a split half of the last minute.

Her mind was well stored, her remarkable memory supporting her taste for the best in classical literature and her keen interest in history and world affairs; so that almost no topic left her at a loss. She had a zest for facts.

Among the qualities that make up character, kindness of heart and sympathy were determining. She was kind, almost universally. Exceptions were due not to intention but to an inability at the moment to put herself completely in another's place; and they were rare. The whole pattern of her life was woven of acts of kindness and consideration toward all manner of people. Her kindness was not a softness, however. Springing from a deep love of people, it also took account of what was good for them. If admonition was needed, admonition came. Wisdom was mixed with kindness, and a high degree of tact with both. She had an amusing way of suggesting a course of action by simply assuming the thing would be done—"I believe you will soon announce your time of coming here," or "I know you love to walk in the woods wearing India rubbers."

She was by nature a conciliator, but in the words of one who testified to that power in her, "She did not try to dissolve oil in water, nor attempt to smother fire with fat."

There was in her nature a baffling contradiction between generosity and extreme care in expenditure. That she was generous there can be no question. A multitude of persons, churches, schools, and other organizations were to attest that. But she practiced various small economies unusual in a person of wealth—even sometimes having her shoes patched and inexpensive china mended.

Allied to her practice of economy was the habit of keeping everything, particularly evident in the matter of papers. For she kept not only the obviously valuable, but all manner of written and printed matter that came to the house. She would tear off the almost clear pages of letters, writing the few excess words on the last full page, and keep the paper thus saved for the making of

memoranda or drafts; or she would jot lists and memoranda on the back of bills, envelopes, other writings. The result is hundreds of miscellaneous scraps of all sizes and kinds.

She kept papers—and she kept many of them in highly unconventional order. Her son Harold once said: “I remember her room. . . . Papers tucked around everywhere. The most unhomelike, unmotherly, undomestic room. Papers around everywhere—under her pillows, under her mattress. Though she had the most wonderful faculty for finding papers I ever saw.” Eventually she submitted to a certain measure of filing after the coming of Mr. Truman B. Gorton, who was her devoted secretary for a quarter of a century—well known, that quick-moving little man, to hundreds of visitors as a tactful buffer, a helpful advocate, and the all-round, all-hours protector of Mrs. McCormick’s interests.

Another apparent contradiction in her nature was between her modest self-effacement and a dominating quality; dominating, never domineering. And it was hardly a contradiction, either, since the power in her that dominated was not assertive. But it was power and based on confidence in her own judgments too. When she had decided that a course of action was good for some one in a relation close to her, it was not a simple matter for him to alter that course.

She was deeply religious by nature, training, and practice. In her parents, her grandmother, her aunt—godly, devout people—belief and emotional experience joined. She was brought up in an atmosphere wherein it was easy to accept the doctrines of the evangelical churches of her day. She did accept and retain them with serene steadiness.

Not that she cared to discuss matters of creed and belief, however. With most of the religious leaders with whom she was associated, common ground was assumed; there was no room for argument, no need for a statement of opinions. When the young people of her family and relationship developed doubts or adopted other points of view, she appears not to have cared to argue. She even, they sometimes thought, failed to meet an issue squarely—perhaps out of a desire for peace, perhaps on deliberate judgment. Yet if the truth she believed in were attacked, she spoke out. When a Princeton professor whose family was knit into her friendship

sent her a book of his that appeared to deny the Trinity, she wrote:

"I know you would not seriously expect me to understand your deep discussions on theological subjects, or detect error in statements of doctrine. I really believe I cannot do that. If your theology contains error, I might feel it but I could not uncover the error or set it forth in a statement. All the theology that I know is of a very plain kind, such as is taught in our Seminary here, and may be briefly summed up to be a faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and love to God and man."

Such were her beliefs. She was orthodox and she was conservative; but liberal in her conservatism, not reactionary. Outright "liberals" found this in her—an ability to keep her mind open to new opinions and to follow proved leadership even along new paths. She had no wish, apparently, to speculate about the unknowable. Referring once to a preacher who had said that he could not preach on Eternal Punishment, she said: "I presume he justly feels that those subjects are mysteries beyond our ken. I think we can not meddle with them. It is enough to teach the unfathomable love of God and Christ."

Her practices were in beautiful accord with the loveliest of her convictions. And the reality of her personal religious experience was clear to all who knew her at all intimately. She was a woman of prayer, she believed in prayer, and she prayed. Sometimes she prayed aloud behind closed doors; and in these dark days of the eighties, days of grief for her husband and her afflicted child, there were sorrowful sounds that awed the "little boys" on the outside.

She had a confident trust in divine providence and divine guidance. Once when illness had disturbed the plans of some one near to her she wrote: "We plan—and God steps in with another plan for us—and He is all wise and the most loving friend we have, always helping us."

She was indeed, as one of her sons was to say years after this period, "a practical worldly angel." And "I know of no one who so combined intellect with a great heart" was John R. Mott's summing up of this woman who aided his work for nearly thirty years.

That summer after her husband's death she spent in Chicago until late in August, sending all of her family except Cyrus ahead

of her out of the heat to Richfield Springs. Her own persistence in remaining caused anxiety to friends who understood how tired she was with the cumulative strain of the past few years, her heaped-up responsibilities, and her sorrow. When at last she left, she was to be away from Chicago for nearly seventeen months.

At Clayton Lodge she found restoring air and daily beauty of scene, overcast by the sadness of recollection. "Dear Cyrus how far away the happy days of last summer seem when the chief figure in greeting my coming was your dear father—and now the emptiness of this place is painful in the *extreme!*"

But she certainly did not find leisure. For in addition to the care of her household, her children, her guests, she carried on a constant correspondence with Cyrus and with officials of the company. A new warehouse and engine room were under way at the works—in that building process she took detailed interest. A new office building, which was to house the company on a corner of Jackson and Market Streets, was another project with which she concerned herself. After the building was up, she carried on a spirited exchange by letter and telegram with her son and C. A. Spring, Jr., general superintendent, about minute details of the arrangement of the offices. The office plan was not adopted until she was satisfied.

These were lesser matters. There were settlements to be made. Most important, hardest on the nerves of mother and son in this first year of their new responsibility, was the climax of the "Gordon Case." Four years before, James F. and John H. Gordon—brothers—and D. M. Osborne, who held an interest in the Gordons' wire-binder patents, had brought suit against the McCormicks for infringement on certain features of their binders, claiming that the McCormicks had not paid the royalty due under a contract of 1874. The McCormicks denied the charges and claimed that the \$20,000 they had paid for a license under the Gordon patents was secured under false pretenses. But their attorneys could not make the claims and denials stick. There was a long series of conferences, with which Mrs. McCormick kept in close touch from her summer home in Richfield Springs, and at one critical time she went to Utica, New York, for conference with her son Cyrus and others. She was sustained by memories of similar struggles in the past. She wrote to Cyrus:

“ . . . I shall esteem the Gordons as having very little sense, if, in these hard times, they see fit to decline so large a sum of money, hoping for the very uncertain, and very distant larger sum they are talking for. As to the boast they make of ‘a million dollars of McCormick’s money’ or half a million, do you remember the Wheelers and Aultmans talked that way for years they talked that way—talked so to Mr. Henry King in Ohio—yet finally they saw, after it had been in the courts a few years, that it was for their interest to settle for \$225,000 and did.”

Eventually the Gordons and Osbornes agreed to accept \$250,000, and from that point were worked down to \$225,000. Mrs. McCormick was not quite happy about her share in the settlement, as she confessed to her son:

“I must tell you . . . that I have been under the conviction during the last few weeks—the somewhat painful conviction—that I might have done a wiser thing at Utica than the thing I did—a more sagacious thing—and that is, knowing as I did that men will generally settle for a much smaller sum than they admit they will settle at. . . . I should have stood then and there at 200. . . . This has depressed me when calls for noble effort have come to us. . . . But,” she ended on a strong, positive note, “I do accept this as past, and I do turn to the future with stout heart and courage that we shall make it up by being liberated from these fetters of lawsuits to turn our thoughts to the economy of our manufacturing and shipping, and to the extension of our sales—and to be ingenious in our workshops in utilizing men’s labor—especially in finding new ground to sell in. I am proud of your part in it.”

Her correspondence does not comment on the manner of the settlement. But of course she knew that to prevent their rivals from using for advertising purposes the check marking their surrender, Cyrus H. McCormick had appeared after banking hours in his opponent’s hotel rooms and handed him that \$225,000 in small bills. It was a safer age than this, one reflects, or no man would have asked another to accept such risk.

They all stayed late at Richfield Springs that fall, enjoying the autumn beauty and the pure, tonic air. But before Thanksgiving they were in New York—and the correspondence went on as briskly as ever. Even when, after Christmas, Mrs. McCormick set

up her family in the Hotel Bellevue, Philadelphia, in order that her elder daughter might be under the care of the famous neurologist, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, she did not cease to direct and decide.

It was while Mrs. McCormick was in Philadelphia in the spring of 1885 that the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company suffered its first real strike. Labor had been growing bitter and restless since the panic of 1873, which had left so many workers jobless. The railway strike of 1877—for an eight-hour day and a wage increase—had swept upon Chicago from the East, bringing three days of violence. In the following years there was sporadic trouble in various Chicago industries, and the city became somewhat aware of a small group of labor leaders who professed allegiance to the principles of philosophic anarchism. Employers had begun to hire the new order of policemen, Pinkerton detectives, to guard their property. And labor had developed a first-class hatred for them. The Knights of Labor, a huge, rather formless organization, was growing in strength. In short, the problems of a rapidly industrializing America were beginning to press.

The immediate cause of the trouble at the McCormick works was a fifteen per cent cut in the wages of the molders, followed by the company's refusal, in view of depressing business conditions, to cancel it in response to protests. The molders struck and within three weeks a large part of the whole body of employees, persuaded or intimidated, had joined them. The employers, interestingly from today's point of view, had stood firmly against "collective bargaining"—and on their right to hire whom they pleased.

Though Mrs. McCormick had known the molders were out, her first knowledge of the general strike, which occurred on April 8, came startlingly through the press. It gave her the news of a clash between Pinkerton guards and the mob wherein a striker was shot and seriously injured. Distressed at not getting much word from home, she was minded to return for a few days. But she was persuaded to stay, and the next day got word that the strike was over.

Meantime she wrote sympathetically and in fine spirit: "This strike is a sad experience to us all, a *new* experience to us all. Our men have always felt a kind of loyalty to our interests, and attachment to us as employers, but this strike shows a change in their attitude—whether with reason or not. Should be investigated."

She had "not met a person" who was not asking her about the widely published reports that wages had been cut below the living point. To her it was an "injurious and startling statement," and she wanted to know the facts. But, she felt, "to do *justly* does not mean to make hasty concessions under compulsion."

Apparently the telegram announcing the end of the strike came before she finished her letter, and at the same time newspaper dispatches were saying that the McCormick works had yielded, agreeing to restore the old wages. "So it seems that it is we who have weakened and not they," Mrs. McCormick wrote. "Concession on both sides, I think, is the right way. . . . I want to know just what we have conceded of terms and prices." And the next day she wired, "If reports correct, what you have done prepares the way for repetition same trouble."

But that was before she had received her son's "long, long, long history" of the strike, which told her the day by day detail as he had recorded it in his journal. In the first place, the Company had employed a group of non-union molders, whom they spirited down to the works on Blue Island Avenue at night by means of their river tug. They kept them there in hastily built quarters. But transportation of others who were willing to work was more difficult. Pinkerton men were employed to protect them in the buses in which they were conveyed from the North Side and severe clashes followed. A Pinkerton driver was beaten, and on an occasion when the Pinkerton men fired presumedly into the air, they hit a striker and wounded him seriously. This was the item that had so alarmed Mrs. McCormick. The papers, which were not generally sympathetic, headlined this as a murder though the text showed that the man was living. As a matter of fact he recovered.

Mayor Harrison was appealed to for protection, so was the Chief of Police; they admitted that both public sympathy and police sympathy were running with the strikers, advised against use of the hated Pinkertons, and gave comparatively little help. The Mayor did send a committee to the office, but as it included two of the leaders—trouble-makers, in Cyrus's view—this was ineffective.

Finally Mr. Philip D. Armour had a friendly talk with Cyrus in which he too said that public sympathy was on the side of the strikers and to some extent rightly so; pointed out that Cyrus must

inevitably be held responsible since nothing like this had happened in his father's time, and advised him to end it. That same day the strikers and the bosses met, and in response to an appeal to Cyrus for advice the office granted the increase demanded, refusing at the same time to dismiss two foremen whose overbearing ways were a large part of the grievance. The strike was over. "The sense of relief in having the strike at an end is refreshing even though the strikers have the best of the bargain," Cyrus frankly told his diary.

Shortly after, writing to her daughter Virginia about the strike, Mrs. McCormick said: "All this might have been averted by prudence when the strike was in its infancy. . . . It begun while Cyrus was here [Philadelphia]. If he had known all the facts on reaching home he could have dealt with it, but it soon got beyond his power to deal with it.

"Cyrus did nobly,—wisely, when he begun to take hold of it.

"It ended by our conceding the terms demanded. If the wages had not been reduced *twice*— . . . what a sore heart I have carried these days,—but I am so proud of the way Cyrus has stood up to these things—these gigantic troubles."

Financially the strike was not a loss to the company. It was characteristic that fairly soon after the strike ended Mrs. McCormick sent to her son a detailed questionnaire as to the costs of stopping the works, of spoiling iron, of bad work under stress, the cost of the burned bus, the surgeon's bill, and so on. Cyrus did not get around to giving her the replies until July, when he filled in the very sheet she had sent him and added details of the savings in wages. In all the company had saved about \$40,000. Unfortunately, no comment of Mrs. McCormick's on the total balance sheet, human and financial, is found.

A year later there was a dreadful sequel—another and a far more serious clash culminating in the Haymarket Riot that set Chicago rocking. This time, because Mrs. McCormick and her son were together in Chicago, there is little written record to illumine her reactions. Many years afterward, however, when a different kind of trouble was on hand, she wrote: "I recited the awful episode in 1886, which resulted in the trial for murder of the anarchists—all arising from the unwisdom, at first, of Averill, superintendent." Probably, though no details of her recital remain, she meant by

"unwisdom" a characteristic harshness rather than any basic principle of the superintendent's policy.

There had been continued unrest—a series of minor strikes. Low wages and unemployment made life difficult for the worker. Agitation for the eight-hour day was intensifying, complicated by the revolutionary doctrines of anarchistic leaders.

At the McCormick works there were still the two bosses who had figured so unfavorably the year before. Wages had been cut again. In February of 1886, at the instance of the Knights of Labor, demands were made by a committee of McCormick workmen for increase in wages to the point from which they had been cut, and for the establishment of the principle that union activities should not be a ground for discrimination. The Company readily granted the wage increase; on the point of refusing dictation by the union it stood firm. The committee declining to accept the position, Cyrus McCormick closed the works, throwing out fourteen hundred men.

The lockout lasted from the middle to the end of February. Union representatives demanded the dismissal of five non-union men, whom, they said, the foundry foreman (the same whose dismissal had been sought the year before) had threatened. This was refused. Other groups asked the reopening of the works on the company's terms. When the decision was reached to reopen—at wages ranging from \$1.50 a day for laborers to \$2.00 a day for skilled workers—Cyrus McCormick himself drove down the Black Road, through the muttering crowd gathered around the barred gates of the factory. His son Cyrus tells the story in *The Century of the Reaper*. A rumor had been circulated that troops might come to protect the factory gates from attack. The crowd had collected as many arms as it could. Down the long street in a buggy, with trotting horses, came a young man, smiling and apparently carefree. The crowd parted. He waved good morning, drove through the crowd to the gates. Not recognizing him, they gasped at his temerity. He gave an order to the guard within, the gate swung back, and he entered. In a moment he reappeared and called to the crowd, "Come on in, boys, if you want to work. The gate is open."

But this was not the end. The trouble smoldered. Not all the men were taken back. The agitators, with a good cause—the im-

provement of the laborer's lot—were busily doing it harm by inflammatory propaganda. May Day trouble was expected, did not come. Two days later there was an attack by strikers and others on non-union workers and guards, incited by the anarchist August Spies. When the police responded to a riot call, they were met with stones. They replied with bullets and several persons were wounded. Spies, editor of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, then published an incendiary circular and called for a protest meeting for the evening of May 4 in Haymarket Square. The meeting flamed into tragedy. It had gone along peaceably enough during most of the evening. In the judgment of Mayor Harrison, who was present, the speeches were hot but not revolutionary. But after he left, a zealous sub-officer, Inspector Bonfield, decided otherwise, marched on the meeting with a hundred and seventy-six men, and ordered it to disperse. A bomb was thrown, policemen were killed and wounded, policemen fired into the crowd, dealt death and injury.

A reign of terror followed. Chicago was shaken and nerve-torn; the police made sweeping arrests, found any amount of evidence of anarchistic propaganda, though not the identity of the bomb thrower. The trial of the anarchists—eight of them—was conducted by Judge Joseph E. Gary, a bitter foe of labor organizations, in an atmosphere of emotion, prejudice and, in the judgment of some historians, extreme unfairness. Seven men were condemned to death by hanging, for inciting to violence, one to fifteen years' imprisonment for conspiracy. Four of the men, in November 1887, were hanged; one committed suicide in his cell; three whose sentences were commuted were pardoned in June 1893 by Governor Peter Altgeld, with a resulting storm of criticism as well as much praise.

Even before the sentences were carried out in 1887 there was strong reaction. Great pressure was put upon Governor Oglesby to commute all the sentences, and a last-minute secret meeting of business leaders, called by Lyman J. Gage, to consider asking commutation, would probably have altered the event, if Marshall Field had not stood against such a request.

There is nothing to show the McCormicks' position, except Mrs. McCormick's reference to Averill, the reception of letters praising their steadfastness, and the response to one of these made by Cyrus that "we have together, done what we could to uphold liberality

and fairness in our dealings with the laboring classes so far as our men are concerned, and where the issue was one of principle, we have been unwilling to surrender, whatever might be the cost." In the *Interior*, which might be considered as in some sort a McCormick expression, there appears no concern over the question of fairness in the conduct of the trial though much over the menace of these advocates of violence.

Of special incidental interest among Mrs. McCormick's papers are two letters written to her in October of 1886 by Emma Dryer, leader of "Bible-Work" under Dwight L. Moody, the letters of a spectator at one of the trials of Fielden, Spies, and Parsons, three of the anarchists. Though unsympathetic with Fielden's views, Miss Dryer was impressed with his long, passionate plea for justice to the poor (whom she served so well). She held that the government must go much deeper even than the execution of justly condemned leaders of anarchy, and urged Christian education as the one great answer.

Another trouble, long in brewing, came to a climax during Mrs. McCormick's stay in Philadelphia. This was the controversy between the Cyrus and the Leander lines of the McCormick family which, though in a quiet phase at the time of the elder's death, was not settled. Its roots reach far down into their history and it was to shadow the family relationship for at least another generation.

The adjustment of August 11, 1879, referred to in the preceding chapter, had started well but had soon proved unsatisfactory. There were questions concerning patents and questions of authority. Leander McCormick and his son Robert Hall felt that they were ignored, claimed that orders went direct from the office to the men, and gradually they made a practice of staying away from work. Early in 1880 Cyrus Hall McCormick set forth to the directors a detailed complaint of the two. They replied, and at the same time the son resigned and the father announced a "temporary" absence of about six months. The elder brother in turn answered, the office of superintendent of manufacturing (Leander's) was declared vacant, and a resolution censuring Leander and Hall was placed upon the records. Leander McCormick's "temporary" absence extended beyond the six months, but salaries of father and son were claimed throughout the five-year period of the contract. Leander McCormick asserted that he had been forced out, Cyrus

McCormick that Leander had walked out. Leander and Hall, still directors, demanded the expunging of the resolution and the payment of their salaries. On another of their demands, concerning the price to be paid for the machines shipped abroad in 1878-1879, Cyrus McCormick had yielded, paying considerably more than the cost price for which he had held out. But when he died there had been no concession on either the salaries or the resolution of censure.

Yet personal relations between the brothers had been pleasanter in the last year or so of Mr. McCormick's life. The elder brother had taken considerable interest in the marriage of his brother Leander's daughter, Henrietta Laura, to a visiting Englishman, Frederick Goodhart. After hearing of Cyrus McCormick's death Mr. Goodhart wrote from England, where Leander McCormick was at the time: "Poor Mr. McCormick was quite overcome and stunned by the news. You can hardly imagine how great cause for satisfaction he feels that he and his brother parted on the best of terms."

In the months that followed, Leander McCormick and his son pressed the matter of the resolution and the salaries, as well as the declaration of dividends which had also been one of their demands. There were many unhappy meetings between young Cyrus and his uncle and that uncle's family, with lawyers on both sides. Of these the young president sent careful reports to his mother in Philadelphia, and got advice and encouragement from her in return. Gradually they moved toward the preparation of a resolution that would undo the vote of censure, and toward agreement on \$20,000 as the amount to be paid in back salaries. In the midst of the harrowing negotiations, with endless discussion back and forth, the Leander side threatened a libel suit. To this report, Mrs. McCormick replied spiritedly: "That warm talk does not intimidate me a particle—'tis all wind."

In the fall of 1885 the tension heightened. Leander and Hall hinted that if they could not be satisfied they would resort to the retributive publication of "proofs" which they had been collecting that Robert McCormick and not his son Cyrus was the inventor of a successful reaper. Just when this suggestion of Robert's invention was first made perhaps no one knows. But from time to time there had been word of it—enough to stimulate Cyrus to send

William J. Hanna of the reaper works into the Valley of Virginia to collect data from relatives, servants, neighbors. Leander, coming across this trail, had probably in turn been stimulated to fresh efforts. At any rate, the material in favor of their claim was assembled and printed as a pamphlet under the title, "The Memorial of Robert McCormick," a few months after the inventor's death. It is not necessary to review it here. Mr. McCormick's biographer, William T. Hutchinson, studying all the evidence dispassionately, has made the case for Cyrus Hall McCormick clear, documenting it from his papers with painstaking care.¹ Our concern is with the attitude of his widow.

When the material was printed late in the summer of 1885 Cyrus wrote to his mother: "Shall we recognize the pamphlet . . . ?" His mother's answer was firm and decisive: "Now as to the pamphlet, I think *no* action of ours should hinge on that. No notice whatever can we take of it. It has no life. It is a dead issue they are raising. I believe if we take no notice of it nothing will come of it. We have a plain duty to do, just as if the pamphlet had not been brought to our notice.

"I think no time should be lost in getting a satisfactory resolution passed I mean as satisfactory to them as we can, and the payment of the money.

"You have felt this conviction—I feel it. No time should be lost. . . .

"We have always wanted to live in peace and harmony—and we can if we are wise—I feel—"

The issue was dead. There was nothing here for argument. That this was a choice made in wisdom and dignity, and not from any thought that the case was weak, can not be for a moment doubted. All her strong respect and regard for her husband, all her own integrity in writing of his invention, are convincingly against that thought. To have argued would have been both disloyal and ineffective. She was clear about it and she held her ground unwaveringly.

But that was a different matter from seeking "peace and harmony" in relations with those who had struck at her husband, not openly when he could reply, but within less than a year and a half

¹William T. Hutchinson, *Cyrus Hall McCormick*, Vol. II. New York & London, The Century Co., 1930. Chapter V.

after death had silenced him. She sought it, nevertheless—partly, perhaps, in the conviction that thus she could better protect her husband's memory, since she believed that dead issues should be buried, and partly through the operation of her deeply planted Christian principles of patience and forgiveness. Though she was by temperament tactful and pacific, she was in no wise timid and shrinking. Given the resentment that she must have felt at this attack, only such powerful qualities as these could have carried her along her course.

When at last the records were cancelled, the salaries paid, the dividend granted, she made every effort to carry on as if the family harmony had not been broken. There was a certain amount of neighborly intercourse, a pleasant exchange of correspondence at times. Mrs. McCormick sent gifts for special occasions, and there was warm friendliness between her and some of Leander McCormick's family.

When Leander McCormick in 1890 ceased to be vice president of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, his successor was Eldridge Fowler. This must have been a deep satisfaction to his sister. It was a climaxing point in the new relation between the two that had developed after the death of Mr. McCormick. Brother and sister had always been devoted and in sympathetic touch throughout the varied experiences each had suffered. But there had been something less than congeniality between Mr. McCormick and Mr. Fowler, and the brother had not come freely to his sister's home. There had been business dealings: Mrs. McCormick had early enlisted her husband's interest in her brother, when he was not yet on a firm basis financially, and there is a tradition that she induced Mr. McCormick to lend Eldridge the money that he had been about to spend on a set of emeralds for his young wife. However that may be, Mr. McCormick did offer employment at times and backed business ventures of Eldridge Fowler's with a loan. But though the amenities were observed, the imperious temperament of the master of 135 Rush Street was not agreeable to Eldridge Fowler—whether to endure or to observe.

After his death brother and sister were able to enter more easily into each other's lives, and Eldridge Fowler was soon able to give Mrs. McCormick and her son Cyrus helpful advice in their prob-

lems, personal and business. By the late eighties he had moved from Detroit to Chicago in order to help more.

The circumstances of his own life had changed. Instead of the salt production in Michigan with which he had struggled in the lean sixties, he had turned to the lumber business in which his uncles had trained him at St. Clair and at Clayton, and had gradually won success. By the early nineties he acquired great wealth through the sagacious reserving of mineral rights in Minnesota timber land he sold, in what turned out to be the fabulous Mesabi Iron Range.

Meantime his personal life had changed, too. In 1879, as we have seen, he had lost his only son Melzar, who was already fitting into his father's work. When, three years later, Eldridge's wife, Mary Skinner Fowler, died after a long struggle for health, he was left alone with his daughter Clara, then sixteen. Into these tragic aspects of her brother's life Nettie McCormick had entered deeply, and when he had the responsibility of being mother as well as father to Clara, she had aided in counsels and aided with love. Clara had felt very close to "Aunt Nettie."

The same year that he moved to Chicago, Eldridge married for his second wife a lovely woman who had been a favorite teacher of Clara's at Ogontz school and for a time her companion. But Kate Grosvenor Fowler contracted typhoid fever and died hardly more than two years after her marriage, leaving to the care of Eldridge and Clara her baby daughter Edith, later to be named by her own choice Kate—a new concern of Aunt Nettie as well.

Meantime Eldridge Fowler had entered progressively into some of the outstanding problems of his sister and nephew Cyrus, wherever they might take him. He assumed management of Mrs. McCormick's securities account and advised her about investments; went to Arkansas in order to investigate certain lumber interests; and to McCormick, South Carolina, on mining and real estate matters. He took part in important decisions about where Virginia McCormick should live and about the choice of physicians; eventually he became a trustee for her care and affairs. The McCormick real estate interests were on his mind and he aided in the settlement of Mr. McCormick's estate. With study and experience he became a valued adviser on affairs of the company, and as vice president of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company contributed

most helpfully. He advised on the formation of the still-born American Harvester Company, unfortunate predecessor of the great combination of later years.

In one connection Cyrus said: "I like having Uncle Eldridge because he is *so sound*"; and Mrs. McCormick wrote to Cyrus: "Uncle Eldridge has been a great comfort and is a fine judge of what is best, and most wise in business, and in all things."

Besides which, Uncle Eldridge (Nunkie to the younger daughter, who was especially close to him) was a dearly loved friend of the whole family.

Chapter 11

“WORKING HIS WORKS”

ON THE first anniversary of her husband's last Sunday on earth Mrs. McCormick wrote:

“All this day his face has been before me, his accents have been in my ears, and the blessing of it rests upon me now, just as it did then. I am thinking, Oh, have I done the things I felt stirred to do then? Has the intense impulse I then felt to work the works he left me to do weakened any? These are the thoughts that fill me today as the hand of time points to one completed circle, one year.”

Whatever “works” she may have had in mind, the record of donations during that year was impressive. Mr. McCormick's will had provided that for five years his estate should remain undistributed. During that time his executors, his wife and his son Cyrus, were authorized to make “such reasonable donations therefrom to charitable or benevolent purposes” as in their judgment he would have made if living.

It was of course a complimentary instruction, one not difficult to carry out. For the lines of Mr. McCormick's philanthropy—church, the Seminary, schools—were well defined. And his wife, at least, had certainly shared in defining them. To give as they thought he would have done, his wife and son need hardly do more than consult their own wishes. Family support of the church of course was to continue. So was strong aid to the Seminary which was Mr. McCormick's dearest philanthropy. As for other schools, widow and son met the claims of ties of state loyalty by duplicating the endowment gift which Mr. McCormick had made in the sixties to Washington College (now Washington and Lee University), near his home in the Valley of Virginia. Interested in the struggle to rebuild the old school, he had become a trustee; and he had of-

ferred kindness to its president, General Robert E. Lee, when his health failed.

To several other institutions that perhaps had some hold on Mr. McCormick's interest the executors made small gifts, most of them not to be renewed; but their gifts to schools in the Middle West and the Southern Mountains looked both ways—back to some benevolence of his, forward to creative work that his widow was to carry on.

As the years passed, Cyrus McCormick, Virginian, had naturally become more completely identified with the expanding Middle West. His home was there. His business was based on the needs of the great stretches of prairie. His interest and his machines went out together into Iowa, Dakota, Nebraska. It was natural that his gifts should follow to the young, struggling Presbyterian schools that dotted, infrequently, that great region. And when in 1883 the Presbyterians created a new agency, a Board of Aid for Colleges and Academies, which emphasized the pioneer schools of the prairie country, the course for him, and so for his heirs, was clear.

Mrs. McCormick was intensely interested in the growth of these pioneer schools. She had heard much about them from Dr. Herrick Johnson, president of the Board of Aid, who was a professor in the Seminary of the North-West, a distinguished gentleman, a striking personality, and a cherished friend. College presidents came and went up and down the steps at Rush Street, seeking audience for their stories of difficulties and triumphs. We may take space for a few of the schools thus represented.

There was Pierre University up in the great expanse of what is now South Dakota. The school had opened in 1883 with three pupils under the sonorous name of the Presbyterian University of Southern Dakota (toned down before long to Pierre University). One frame building on that windswept hill took care of everything.

Pierre had high hopes in those days. It was the terminus of the North Western Railroad. Freight destined for army posts beyond, for up-river Indian agencies, for the great cattle ranches on the prairie reaches west of the river, for mining camps in the Black Hills, was brought to Pierre. Thence it was transported by wagon trains hauled by long strings of oxen or mules spurred by "bull whackers" and "mule skimmers." Enormous freight houses stood

along the river front. Fast mail and stage coaches departed daily for the Black Hills.

Believing in the future of Pierre and its new college, the McCormick executors gave the final \$7,500 to erect a second building. It became McCormick Hall in memory of the inventor. And they continued to aid in following years.

But the high hopes of Pierre faded. Railway traffic changed; up-river trade dwindled; drought followed drought; dust storms darkened the skies and all beneath them. Under the hot dry winds the college support withered along with the crops. Finally in 1898 the college was moved to Huron and Scotland Academy came from the town of Scotland to merge with it. Presently, Calvin H. French from Scotland Academy became President, and a new chapter opened in which Mrs. McCormick was to play an important part, her gifts carrying on even beyond her lifetime. Huron College still goes on strongly.

Still farther up in the Dakota cold, in what was to be the State of North Dakota, another Presbyterian college had its beginnings. This was Jamestown College to which the McCormick estate contributed in the later 1880's; but its star was to set in 1893 for sixteen long years. It would rise again when Barend H. Kroeze, familiar with the sight of the lone ruin set on a hill as he traveled by on the train, accepted the presidency, and began almost literally to dig the college out. Into that undertaking Mrs. McCormick, no longer a trustee of her husband's estate, was to enter largely. Taber Hall on Jamestown's lovely campus still attests her interest.

Everything about Hastings College in Nebraska, when the McCormicks' aid was enlisted, was either brand-new or in the future. It was a gallant infant of a school with a campus and soaring hopes, but no buildings. The new synod of Nebraska could not back its endorsement with funds. But even before the Board of Aid had become a reality, Hastings' enterprising president had appealed to Mr. McCormick to give Hastings a building that would be the first gift made under the new Board. It was so done. Even before they reached the General Assembly that was to create the Board, the journeying Hastings officials had word that their plea had been granted.

That first gift attached to the first building the name "McCormick Hall"; within a few years the donor's son and widow had added to the original gift, and a little later Mrs. McCormick had supplied the first real endowment of the college, \$15,000. Through a succession of years an annual check helped to carry running expenses, another gift replaced second-hand stoves with a heating plant, and aid was at hand when the roof leaked or seats were needed.

An early gift of the executors went to "a Christian college on a Missouri mudbank"—Park College, of Parkville, Missouri. It continued an interest in which Mr. McCormick shared but which has far more to say of his wife than of him. To this unique institution Mrs. McCormick gave loyal support over a period of thirty years. The personalities, all named McAfee, of the management appealed to her: John A. McAfee, who gave himself with devoted, almost fierce, persistence to his idea; his self-sacrificing wife, and the five sons and one daughter who carried on his idea and his life work; and the ideas themselves.

Those ideas were: the maintenance of a school where boys and girls who could not get a college training elsewhere might pay from nothing to seventy-five dollars a year, through the working out of a self-help system centering around the thought of a family. All the students shared in the work, cooking and serving meals, cleaning, making beds, building fences, even constructing buildings, and doing all the work of a farm. This program, as the founder saw it, was a part of the education offered—a sound preparation for life, and a generator of the power that would make Park College students civic and religious leaders in their communities. To all this Mrs. McCormick gave warm assent. She was not uncritical, but she thoroughly approved the practical emphasis, the discipline, the simplicity of the life, the use of farm, kitchen, and carpenter shop as instruments of personality building.

The McCormicks had begun to fit into the picture early in the eighties. In 1883 Mr. McAfee at Park could not only delight in the thought of a reaper "well cared for, stored in a plastered room" but could look out of his window at a mower coming in from work in millet. Mr. McAfee's letter of fervent thanks went to Mrs. McCormick, who had probably been the moving force in securing the farm machinery. With money given shortly after Mr. McCor-

mick's death for the purchase of land, the farm was extended and the productive power of the students increased. Not long after, Mrs. McCormick gave Park College a building—that is, the money for materials to erect it by student labor in accordance with the Park College practice. Youths from the classes of the later eighties and the early nineties learned to be stone quarriers, stone masons, and brick makers on behalf of this building. It was named McCormick Chapel and for many years it served as the center of campus life.

At Mrs. McCormick's hands it gained from time to time improvements or repairs. The enormous stove with its pipe in full, unlovely view was replaced by a hot-air furnace. The movable chairs and benches yielded eventually to oaken pews. She bestowed a beautiful red carpet, which she had purchased at the World's Columbian Exposition, on the chapel platform. Not content merely to send the carpet to Parkville, she had it stretched out on the floor of her ballroom and with the aid of experts painstakingly measured it and planned its arrangement on the chapel floor.

Through the years, as long as the McAfee family was at the helm, she stood by with support. Such words as grading, shingling, beef, land, seats, laboratory, water supply, not to mention dormitory and endowment, appear opposite entries in her ledgers under the heading, Park College. Other columns show the range of her warm-hearted concern for the members of that remarkable McAfee family (which included in another generation Mildred McAfee, later Mrs. Douglas Horton, who was to become president of Wellesley College and then head of the Waves). There was provision for dentistry, hospitals, nurses, and the right kind of room for an invalid child. There was the cost of sending a wife along with her husband to General Assembly, for pleasure and also because Mrs. McCormick always liked to exalt the wife's share in the life work of a preacher or professor husband. There were other matters not so much of need as of enjoyment and enrichment—tuition at school or college, summers in camp, the building of a summer cottage, sizable wedding gifts.

Mrs. McCormick's first gift to Tusculum College in the Southern mountains marked the beginning of a major interest of her own. But the story starts before Mr. McCormick's death, when sometime in the early eighties certain young men of the mountains

considered where they would go for theological training. They had finished their college work at Tusculum, an old Presbyterian school in the beautiful Appalachian valley of eastern Tennessee. Now they were ready to carry out the purpose for which so many Presbyterian boys of the mountains entered college—to train for the ministry. And some one had a bright idea: to go to the Seminary of the North-West in Chicago with the double purpose of attending a good school and winning the interest of the McCormicks for Tusculum.

The idea took root, bore blossom and fruit. The Tusculum boys entered the Seminary. About three months before Mr. McCormick died they attended a Seminary reception at the McCormick home. There, according to one recollection, they had an opportunity to tell host and hostess about their beloved college and thus opened the way for a direct approach.

Some months later, the story continues, the Tusculum delegation persuaded Dr. Willis G. Craig, a Kentuckian on the Seminary faculty, to accompany them to the McCormick mansion on Rush Street. Perhaps he only encouraged the young men to go. In any event, Mrs. McCormick in her heavy crape listened to them with gracious attention.

Tusculum, they told her, was Presbyterian, sound, needy, Southern, though in that part of Tennessee which had stayed with the Union in the Civil War. The students were nearly all from the neighboring mountain regions, of the same Scotch-Irish stock from which Mr. McCormick had sprung; eager to work and sacrifice for an education; likely to join ministerial ranks, via the Seminary in Chicago.

Always an eager and skilful questioner, Mrs. McCormick undoubtedly brought out the highlights of Tusculum's history: how the Rev. Samuel Doak, a Presbyterian clergyman and a Princeton scholar, had penetrated into this lovely valley in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, built a log cabin to house the modest beginnings of Martin Academy, which by 1795 had become Washington College; how after preaching and teaching the classics there for twenty-three years, he had come fourteen miles farther along the valley to set up another academy, which in time became Tusculum College. Again the combination church and school was a log cabin. Here tradition says he competently heard students of



Nancy (Nettie) Fowler at nearly fifteen From a daguerreotype



Maria Esselstyn Fowler and Eldridge M. Fowler—Mrs. McCormick's grandmother and brother



Mr. and Mrs. McCormick shortly after marriage 1858 Washington, D.C.
Photographs by Brady



Mrs. McCormick 1861 From a portrait by G. P. A. Healy



Nettie Fowler McCormick 1867
From a portrait by Cabanel



Mrs. McCormick, Cyrus and Mary Virginia 1865 (Tintype)
 "The little boys" Harold and Stanley 1879 Paris Photograph by Mathieu-Deroche



Mrs. McCormick at fifty New York Photograph by G. C. Cox



The Rush Street House Chicago Photograph by R. Capes



The bonnet was a feature of Mrs. McCormick's dress for years
Chicago Photograph by Lewis-Smith



Mrs. McCormick with her daughter, Anira McCormick Blaine, and her son, Cyrus H. McCormick
Chicago Photograph by Koehne



Mrs. McCormick at seventy Chicago Photograph by Koehne



Mrs. McCormick at House-in-the-Woods, Lake Forest 1919
Chicago Photograph by Moffett

two or more Latin classes recite at once, his trained ear as quick to detect errors of sound as an orchestra leader's. Perhaps they showed her his picture, in buckled shoes, with a large white stock and a white cap fastened under his chin.

By 1844 the Academy had become a college. It all but disappeared during the War between the States, when troops swept back and forth over that country. But a few miles farther west another Princeton pioneering preacher, Hezekiah Balch, had organized even earlier another school—Greeneville College, along with Mount Bethel Church. When the war rolled over the far eastern end of Tennessee, this school too was wrecked. But in the late sixties the small remains of Greeneville College and Tusculum College gathered themselves literally together and united under the name "Greeneville and Tusculum College," and today, though "Greeneville" has disappeared, the date of its founding, 1794, is preserved over Tusculum's gateway.

What those youths told Mrs. McCormick about the work of the school and the character of its students is clear from the letter that she wrote to the College Board, her response to the young men's plea:

"There has been for seventy years a Presbyterian classical school at a village called Tusculum in the mountains of East Tennessee and it is said to have educated and sent out more fine scholars into the Presbyterian ministry on less capital than any school in the country.

"The young men have all these years brought food from the farms, and have lived in small cabins and cooked it themselves while they were getting their education. Every thing about their *one* building is of the most primitive and limited character. Ten thousand dollars will put up *there* as good a building as twenty thousand will do *here*, and of this ten thousand they have four thousand, and would like us to furnish six thousand. If we do this will you let this money be given by us through your board? They always remained loyal to the northern Presbyterian Church Assembly.

"Such material as those steadfast mountaineers is not met with every day, and I want to see this institution built. . . ."

Needless to say, the Board gave its gracious consent. Today on that beautiful campus with its glorious Appalachian backdrop

five college buildings and several houses attest Mrs. McCormick's interest in Tusculum. But that is by no means the whole story. There is a record of years of support, of the founding and maintenance of a department of home economics (when it was called domestic science), of the painstaking choice of teachers, whose salaries she paid and with whose work she kept in close touch, and of innumerable loving-kindnesses to faculty and students. There is more to tell of Nettie Fowler McCormick and Tusculum later.

The two other southern institutions on this roll-call of beginnings were related to Mr. McCormick's South Carolina interests though her giving was not inspired by his. Thornwell Orphanage at Clinton was an interest distinctly Mrs. McCormick's own, though it began in her husband's time. There were particularly appealing elements in it—an expression of her love of children; of her thought of her own orphan state ("An orphan is to me an object of peculiar interest"), her sympathy with an advanced attitude about the care of orphans; and the unusual circumstance that in all her long years of aiding this institution she saw its director just once and that for a brief time years after she had become a donor. But Dr. William Plumer Jacobs, head of the Orphanage, had conveyed through his letters so clear and loving a picture of his charges that Mrs. McCormick must have felt well acquainted with him and the work.

She knew about Thornwell before the first building was opened. On a day in 1875 when she and her husband were on a train leaving White Sulphur Springs in West Virginia, General Robert D. Lilley, financial agent for Washington and Lee University and an old friend of the family, told of the orphanage idea and received from Mrs. McCormick her first contribution—ten dollars.

The idea had come with oppressive compulsion to the young pastor of the Presbyterian church at Clinton. He had pondered, being sure of the need but not seeing the way, for he lived on a tiny salary, and South Carolina was poor; but finally he began to tell others of his idea—a new one, then—for an orphanage that would be a home, not an asylum, and then the first gift came to him when an orphan boy laid in his hand a fifty-cent piece. The next day that gift was matched by his own little daughter and the fund was on its way.

In its early days the orphanage was under fierce attack from

various persons and papers in the state. They were against Dr. Jacobs's plan because of its fundamental principle that the orphans should be treated and educated as well as any other children. These attacks caught the attention of Judge J. S. Cothran of Abbeville, who was the attorney and representative for the McCormicks' interest at the Dorn Gold Mine some fifty miles away from Thornwell. He took occasion to tell Mrs. McCormick sympathetically about the orphanage and its trials, and before long she gave a thousand dollar scholarship, which yielded in those spacious days the necessary \$70 to care for one little orphan every year and greatly encouraged the young principal. It came to be known as the Nettie McCormick scholarship. Boxes of boys' clothing, Christmas cards, money went to Thornwell from time to time. And after Mr. McCormick's death, mother and son allotted to the orphanage a modest sum to add a pleasant cottage to the campus. The cornerstone of the new home was laid on Mr. McCormick's birthday enclosing articles chosen by his wife, and the keystone bears the inscription, "The McCormick Home for Orphan Boys."

Other cottage homes followed, each named for a member of Mrs. McCormick's family, six of them; also a large part of the endowment needed to secure the president's chair, and many other gifts, including contributions to Dr. Jacobs's health and happiness—aids to vacation and rest for the overstrained, devoted man.

His one meeting with Mrs. McCormick was at Asheville in 1892. She sent for him to come to her at the Battery Park Hotel, where she was held by illness with Harold and Stanley in attendance. Years later he wrote her, "I remember your bright and happy face and I then wondered how you could be so happy under such affliction"—referring to her deafness. The same affliction had come to him now, and in the later years he bore the added burden of almost total blindness. But he continued to serve his orphans and to radiate the beautiful faith that had guided him.

"People feel," Mrs. McCormick wrote to him, "that you weave more of home, and less of the institution into your Orphanage than any other man perhaps in the country." Dr. Jacobs credited her with much of the success at Thornwell: "You have done noble work here, and I am claiming it as if it were my work. I could have done nothing, or next to nothing, had it not been for you." Success meant to him turning "little stray urchins into Doctors of

Divinity, Deans of Medical Colleges, leading editors in wide-awake communities and loving and true hearted wives and mothers."

Mrs. McCormick's other South Carolina interest was an academy at the little town named for her husband on the scene of his long search for gold. Between 1868 and 1881 he had sunk in the Dorn Gold Mine, in what was then Laurens County, well over \$200,000, not to mention a vast expenditure of time, energy, and emotion. He was deaf to the advice of trusted advisers, including his wife—at least until within a few years of his death. Mrs. McCormick herself visited the place, as he never did. She worked the inspection into a trip to Augusta in the spring of 1882 when her daughter Virginia with an aunt and some of her family went down there to prepare a house for Mr. McCormick's winter residence. He never went; but accompanied by a young woman friend from New York, Mrs. McCormick joined the group in this house on the sandhills overlooking Augusta and herself enjoyed the beauties of flowering trees and blooming roses, the cool dry air and warm sunshine, the charming views.

She tore herself away from the pleasure of relaxing in these happy surroundings (and her usual occupations of attending to mail and telegrams) to make the trip to the Dorn Mine. Apparently the unfavorable opinion that she had always held was reinforced. Within a few months work had been suspended at the mine; but it was not finally stopped until the following year after Cyrus the second had in turn visited the grim scene. His mother wrote him careful instructions on all points, ending "Now after this is done you will go to the mine. . . . Try and find out all you can about those awful holes in the earth—but not by exploring them all night!!"

Cyrus sent back to her a depressing picture of "decaying mills, tottering buildings, rust-eaten machinery, scattered shafts and cog wheels." "Through it all," he added, "there runs a dark thread of misrepresentation, deceit, intrigue, imposition and misplaced confidence in sinners who were supposed to be saints. This is the 'great gold mine' of today at McCormick, S.C."

Mrs. McCormick replied: "I have your truthful description of that great puzzle which has brought us only *troubles*—and as many of them as Pandora's box held. . . . I wish papa would never be puzzled again as to what to do with the Mine. I wish he

would shut it up forever—and I have always, uniformly, so advised him always—always since we owned it. I would do something for the town of McCormick and perhaps something to develop the railroad interest, but not the gold mine."

Presently, by Mrs. McCormick's own order, it was closed—never again to be worked by the McCormicks, though some manganese was mined there.

But if Mrs. McCormick was less than lukewarm toward the gold mine, she was whole hearted toward the building up of a town at this point. That idea had flowered late in 1881 when it became evident that a railroad was coming to the town, if aided by Mr. McCormick, and that thus the shipping of manganese might at last be profitable. Besides, there was a sincere wish to help this community despite the grief suffered here. Forty acres of the twelve hundred were set aside for the town. A fine site it was—"high, dry, and piny," wrote the legal adviser and friend, C. C. Copeland, whom Mr. McCormick sent down to investigate and who ended as auctioneer. Lots were sold, on a rainy day that discouraged purchasers; but the town was started even though the first railroad was still three miles away. Streets were named after members of the McCormick family and their friends.

And in one small way, at any rate, Dorn Mine gold entered into the picture. For the McCormicks' agent cut the first stick in laying out the town and had it made into a cane with gold from Dorn Mine for a head.

Within the next two or three years the Savannah Valley Railroad had come to cross the Greenwood & Augusta Railroad and the town progressed. In the summer after Mr. McCormick's death Mrs. McCormick and Cyrus agreed to build an academy or high school building, and give land for a cemetery. The town rejoiced and celebrated the completion of the Academy by holding a "Grand Educational Barbecue." Mrs. McCormick took her usual close interest in the details of constructing this building. She sent a young architect, A. Page Brown, a protégé of hers, to draw plans for the Academy, for the Memorial Home at Thornwell Orphanage, and for that first building of hers at Tusculum College. The Academy was a simple, substantial building of three rooms set on a hill overlooking the town; the McCormicks deeded it to a local board of trustees, and the town took great pride in it. At first there was only

one teacher, and instead of the conventional grade system classes were arranged according to the books available. An early student reported: "Each pupil brought what books he could. Should two pupils have the same books, they were placed in a class together."

Improving with the years, the school served its purpose until in 1912 it was replaced by a more modern and a larger structure. A marble slab at its main entrance bears the inscription:

"This tablet is erected in grateful appreciation of the munificence of Mrs. Nettie F. McCormick, who donated the site of this building."

And now we turn to a Chicago interest other than the McCormick Theological Seminary, to which a separate chapter is given.

As we have seen, both Mr. and Mrs. McCormick shared actively in the work of Dwight L. Moody, the famous evangelist. In the third year after Mr. McCormick's death, Mr. Moody came from the East to carry out a long-cherished plan.

Mr. Moody was now at the zenith of his great powers. This man who had known but meager schooling had founded and was ably conducting two schools near his home in Northfield, Massachusetts—Mount Hermon School and Northfield Seminary, for boys and girls, respectively, of limited means. His preaching had won thousands of converts in cities all over the United States and in Great Britain. In 1886 he had conducted the first Students' Conference at Northfield, and a hundred students had volunteered for foreign missions.

Going about the country, Mr. Moody had realized the vast need for Bible training and at the same time had met numbers of men and women who, with such training, would be efficient lay workers. His idea was to start a Bible Institute as a permanent school and to start it at a strategic point—Chicago, centrally located and with a population of many racial strains and with extensive depressed areas still churchless. The plan was, at that time, unique.

During the first four months of 1887 Mr. Moody conducted an evangelistic campaign in Chicago in churches and roller-skating rinks, working at the same time to establish the organization which would carry out his plan. In February, in "Mr. Moody's room" at the Grand Pacific Hotel, a constitution was adopted for the Chicago Evangelization Society. When Mr. Moody left for the East that summer, the Society was in existence, funds had been

raised, and a building was projected. But the actual building halted because of labor troubles, money delays, and stresses in the new society.

The oppressively hot summer of 1887, when improvement of the constitution was studied by some of the Chicago group, brought a crisis. In the course of it Mr. Moody, then in Northfield, resigned rather than oppose the will of Chicago friends, for whom Mrs. McCormick was spokesman, about organization details. On receiving this word, Mrs. McCormick, amazed and hurt, instantly resigned in turn from the work, protesting that his withdrawal would endanger the whole cause. "You are the cement that holds it together," she wrote. "My being in it is not important to it." She did not withdraw the \$50,000 pledged by the estate of Mr. McCormick (which certainly was important to it), but she dropped an offer of certain lots for the projected building.

Back of this surprising episode were no doubt various elements of disagreement. "I have never had my heart so set on anything as on this society," wrote Mr. Moody, "but for six months I have had to oppose some of the dearest friends I have ever had & I am tired and sick of it. I now take it that God is closing the door to me in Chicago. . . ."

To correct defects, Mrs. McCormick and others had proposed the enlargement of the Board of Managers and a lessening of the power of a tiny minority. Something in the suggestions must have been in key with a strain, vague now as to details, felt during the preceding months—a strain that pulled deeper even than the surface issues. It was particularly perhaps the tension between Emma Dryer, director of Bible Work, and Mr. Moody and between their respective supporters.

The air, as to Mr. Moody's resignation, was of course cleared by explanations and Mr. Moody's telegraphed apology. "This telegram," Mrs. McCormick wrote, "touched me deeply, as showing a large heart, I thought." His resignation, held back from the Board of Trustees by a wise counselor, was withdrawn, and Mrs. McCormick continued to help as the work moved forward through perplexities to the building of a home for the Bible Institute.

In the autumn of 1889 the Institute opened in its first building. There were separate departments for men and women. For both

the basic instruction was in the English Bible, with other training designed to turn out city missionaries, pastors' assistants, colporteurs, foreign missionaries, evangelists, and other workers.

Meantime the strain within the organization had continued and Mrs. McCormick had been drawn upon as peacemaker. After the distressing incidents of midsummer, 1887, she wrote to one of the very few who knew about the difficulties: "I had *tried to help make peace*—encouraging Mr. Moody—showing him that light was just ahead, for I could see at the Grand Pacific later meetings that he was *distressed*—and, also, I was certainly *obliged* . . . to comfort Miss Dryer's deeply wounded heart (you know our anxieties) showing her where she mistook meanings, &c.

"These simple kindnesses should not be construed as choosing sides. . . . I have not taken sides, but wished to help reconcile the two—the *two leaders*."

Bible-Work and the Chicago Evangelization Society for a time united; but it was a troubled union, lasting little over a year. During that year Mrs. McCormick and her daughter Anita spent a Sunday at Northfield with the Moodys, and the Chicago difficulties were discussed. Mr. Moody said: "I will do anything on earth that you bid me do. . . . I am tied. I am in a vise. The situation is locked." Mrs. McCormick suggested a practical program—a fixed sum for Miss Dryer's work and then the pushing of the men's part. She also asked him to see Miss Dryer again. He did. But the situation did not clear. The difference in Mr. Moody's and Miss Dryer's ways of working—Miss Dryer orderly, precise, rigid even, committed to careful planning; Mr. Moody working in wider sweeps, setting things in motion—this probably even more than definite differences of opinion on the management of the work made a separation inevitable. Mrs. McCormick herself had said some time before that from thinking that the differences were only apparent she was "getting to feel that there is a real divergence—just *where* it is, you cannot define—whether in method, or in want of harmony, but you cannot but feel it."

Members of the Board of Trustees now felt that Miss Dryer was overworked and ill and in no condition to take the headship of the women workers' home—the post that she would naturally have held in the new enterprise. They urged a vacation—a paid vacation, but one in which the new work and its home for women

workers would be set going. She refused. Mr. Moody proposed a compromise, but his Board would not have it. Finally Mr. Moody took the painful initiative, and before many months Miss Dryer and her little band of earnest Bible Workers were associated with the Chicago Bible Society, Mrs. McCormick still paying her salary. The separation had been a sharp wrench for Miss Dryer, but she never failed in loyal interest in Mr. Moody's work.

The long record of Mrs. McCormick's ledgers, reflecting hundreds of causes, shows the preference that these early gifts of the executors forecast: a preference for Christian education as a means of improving the world. In these earlier years the emphasis fell on religious schools at home. Later this was to be divided with mission schools and other institutions abroad.

Among the American schools chosen a majority but not all were of her own denomination. With a few exceptions, especially Princeton, they were schools of the West and certain areas of the South rather than those of the East. This was a deliberate choice. She felt that more people were likely to take an interest in the Eastern schools and also that the needs of the Southern and Western schools were more acute and immediate.

The development of a group of schools in the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina was distinctly hers. Domestic science departments in these schools were her contribution. And the flowering of her interest in foreign missions and particularly in their most forward-looking institutions was from seed planted in her own early life rather than in her husband's.

All her giving was marked by two outstanding qualities, a meticulous, painstaking attention to detail and a whole-hearted giving of herself—her time, thought, affection, prayer with her gift. She added personal interest in the worker to interest in his work. Then she added personal interest in the details of that work. For instance, if a building were to be put up with her aid in a considerable amount, she concerned herself with the architect's plans. If the building were practically her gift, she went deeply into the plans as a matter of course, taking responsibility in consultation with the architect and the officials involved for decisions. Even when the last word was not hers, she willingly gave of her experience and knowledge. A former Young Men's Christian Association secretary relates an instance: Mrs. McCormick had given a

generous sum toward the erection of a student building in Manila, where this man, J. M. Groves, was executive. Dr. John R. Mott was eager to have Mrs. McCormick see the architect's plans and arranged to have Mr. Groves, home on leave, show them to her.

"I had imagined," he said, "that a woman of prominence, with many interests and benefactions, would not give the drawings much detailed attention. My imagining was greatly mistaken. Mrs. McCormick went over the tentative plans 'with a fine-tooth comb.' She was evidently concerned that the kitchen arrangements should be convenient and labor-saving, and made practical suggestions for changes to this effect. I was impressed by her enthusiasm, simplicity and courtesy."

Love of people, sympathy, keen judgment, quick grasp, a "racing mind," a memory that put all her mental stores in reach, foresight, breadth of view and knowledge—all these were characteristic items of grace in her personality.

To what extent she had also conscious guiding principles, it would be hard to estimate; but certain general ways of giving emerge in her practice. For one thing, she followed the guidance of those in each field of whose authority and dependability she was assured. If a man were in a position implying knowledge of needs and soundness of judgment, she trusted him—first tentatively, until she had seen his work and tested it, then definitely. Among the workers themselves she would make her own judgments after she had seen a man two or three times, and would no longer require official approval. Naturally, strong personal liking added weight. After all, her investments, though solidly lodged in permanent institutions—and this was important to her—were in men and women. Being influenced by the qualities of these people was only a way of choosing the instruments of purposes she found good. Having accepted them, she was deeply loyal.

Nevertheless she did not usually accept recommendations without deliberation. She applied her own tests by further questioning, seeking to assure herself both that the cause presented was sound and that it fitted her program and her current resources for donations. There are delightful instances of spontaneous, swift decisions, but almost always there was a background of knowledge, or personal grounds for confidence. Normally it was her practice to deliberate and to investigate.

Chapter 12

THE CIRCLE WIDENS

THE year 1889 was a year of romance in this family, taking two of Mrs. McCormick's children from her home, or adding two, as one chooses to count the family effects of marriages. She herself was torn between these points of view. Her friends were commiserating with her and exhorting her to be brave, and she wrote to one of them ". . . how it overcomes me to go about, among the rooms & things, and places that have known my children dear, all these years—and to see that all Cyrus' things are now all put together, *to take away!* (Oh how hard that word is)—and to feel that soon Anita's things will be all gathered together, oh, how can I say it—to take away! I have just got to stop & sit down and cry until I am almost blind." (How typical of her are the means of diversion from her grief: "Then I get into the buggy and go down to the Works to see the new steel reaper & binder all steel, to see to things there that need attention. . . .") But though she wept she was welcoming a new daughter and a new son with loving warmth.

In the late winter Cyrus was married to Harriet Bradley Hammond, a beautiful blonde girl, half English by blood and English-born, who had lived with her aunt, Mrs. Edward Stickney in the Rush Street neighborhood since she was twelve. The marriage took place in California, where Mrs. Stickney was wintering for her health. "To be married in California," Mrs. McCormick wrote early in the consideration of plans, "would seem something like being married in a foreign land which I never thought well for Americans having position at home." But when she fully understood the strength and nature of the reasons impelling the young people to the choice, she abandoned her preference with affectionate grace.

Some weeks before the wedding, Mrs. McCormick went to California to seek a home for her invalid daughter—a wearying but successful quest; and before the wedding day, the fifth of March, the entire family was united at Monterey.

The marriage took place about two miles from Monterey in the lovely little Episcopal Church of St. Mary's-by-the-Sea where the Pacific gleamed through pines. "The bride in dress of white was lovely," wrote Mrs. McCormick, "coming up the aisle leaning upon the arm of her aunt, Mrs. Stickney; while Cyrus manly & calm awaited them at the altar." The church was largely occupied by a group of relatives and friends, many of them brought on from the East by the bridegroom in a special car. His best man was a cousin, Edward S. Adams from Chicago, and his sister, Anita McCormick, was maid of honor. After "Mrs. Stickney's handsome wedding breakfast," bride and groom started off in an open carriage with white-ribboned horses, Harold and Stanley accompanying as outriders.

McCormick family affairs moved rapidly in the next few months. Cyrus and his bride, returning from an idyllic honeymoon, came home to 135 Rush Street and a large reception before starting on a trip abroad. There were sad difficulties to be met in the problem of caring for the invalid elder daughter. And romance was blooming in the life of the brilliant younger daughter, Anita. Emmons Blaine, a son of the famous statesman, James G. Blaine, had taken the lead among Anita McCormick's many admirers and by early May had avowed his love. Anita's mother was reluctant to give consent. Anita had had many suitors with no sign of more than friendly interest, and her ardent response to this man had taken her mother by surprise. Both she and her son Cyrus appear to have been thunderstruck. Fragments of her writings, found decades later, reveal that she told Emmons Blaine she doubted that he could make Anita happy. He was a "clubman," as her father and brother had never been; that appears to have been a strand in her thought—he was different, worldly. She asked that the two should not for a period of three months see each other. "It is fair to ask it. A prudent mother would not fail to ask it." Once when Mr. Blaine showed signs of taking the agreement lightly, she was severe with him. "If, having business west of this," she wrote, "you had gone to it by another way than Chicago I should have very

greatly appreciated it." But she herself, as she felt she was entitled to do, broke the agreement by inviting Emmons Blaine to visit them at Richfield Springs.

But before that time, realizing the unchanging intensity of Anita's love, she surrendered and sent for Emmons Blaine to come to Rush Street. The outcome was that she warmly accepted Anita's choice. "Oh, how different life seems to me!" she wrote to him, "*how* plainly I hear the melody that is weaving itself through the harmonies of my darling child's life these days: I pause when I think on what a height of happiness she stands in having the gift of your love! And I am stilled into silence when I think of the gift she gives to you—the entire love of a pure, strong heart! felt for you, and toward you, every moment of life!"

In July the engagement was announced. The wedding date was not set when Cyrus, accompanied by his wife, went to Europe in connection with reaper trials. But suddenly at Richfield Springs came decision—Anita's. The wedding would take place there away from the "paraphernalia" and the publicity of a Chicago affair, and it would take place in September. There was consternation in the camp of the McCormicks in Europe, for it seemed important to await the reaper awards. But business was somehow adjusted, arrangements for trousseau and wedding proceeded, and the whole family assembled at Clayton Lodge.

As the day approached, Richfield Springs lost its head in a happy way and overrode the bride's wish for "moderation." On the evening before the wedding the friendly townsfolk illuminated their houses and made Spring House Park and the main streets gay with hundreds of Chinese lanterns. It was of course in compliment not only to the McCormicks but also to James G. Blaine and his party, who were staying at the Spring House. Up at the Lodge, filled with other guests, the entrance archway in the famous arbor-vitae hedge bore the words MCCORMICK-BLAINE in red and blue flowers.

The wedding was carefully keyed to a simplicity suitable for the chosen country setting; but a rich simplicity nevertheless, appropriate to the station of the families involved. The ceremony took place at noon of September 26, a day on which the early autumn beauty was dimmed by a downpour, in the little red brick Presbyterian Church, pleasantly set among tall trees on a hill slope.

Soft light from its stained glass fell on rich silks and waving plumes as the guests gathered. On the stroke of twelve, preceded only by four ushers, two of whom were her young brothers, the bride entered on her brother Cyrus's arm, and walked—tall, graceful, in exquisiteness of white satin and lace, of orange blossoms and lilies of the valley—to the chancel where her bridegroom waited with his brother Walker. A Chicago organist, William L. Tomlins, supplied wedding music and the McCormicks' beloved minister at Fourth Church, Chicago, Dr. Herrick Johnson, with the Richfield Springs pastor, performed the ceremony. The bride's mother in heavy black silk, her sister and their party, sat on one side in front pews, with the Blaine family balancing them across the aisle.

A charming feature—remembered over the years by Richfield Springs people—was the joyous pealing of the church bells as the ceremony ended and the wedding party emerged to take carriages for the breakfast and reception at Clayton Lodge. A profusion of roses and orchids, and everywhere festoons of smilax, made a background of beauty for the young couple as they stood to receive good wishes. And the guests—friends and relatives from all over the country, many of national distinction, with Richfield Springs friends too—had an opportunity to see well the lovely Paris wedding gown of Valenciennes lace with its train of white satin that was Mrs. McCormick's gift. They were served an elaborate wedding breakfast from a table set with ingenious caterer's novelties.

Presently the bride and groom had gone—in the private car that village folk had seen arrive that morning from Utica—to their honeymoon at the Blaine cottage in Bar Harbor.

The next time mother and daughter were together in that little church at Richfield Springs, on a November Sunday in 1896, it was to honor the memory of Emmons Blaine, who had died less than three years after the marriage. To this church Mrs. Blaine had given a fine pipe organ, exquisitely carved by Tiffany, adding changes in chancel, glass, and other decorations to enhance the setting. On the keyboard of the organ is this inscription:

"This organ is placed here to the memory of Emmons Blaine by his wife Anita McCormick Blaine and in commemoration of their marriage in this church September 26, 1889."

A considerable company of relatives and intimate friends jour-

neyed to Richfield Springs for the beautiful ceremony of dedication. Walter Damrosch, a brother-in-law of Mr. Blaine, presided at the organ in a service of great impressiveness. Mrs. Blaine, declining to speak, gave her word in a note read by the pastor:

"May I, through you, formally offer to the Presbyterian Church of Richfield Springs, the organ I placed within its walls in honor of my husband, Emmons Blaine, to bear his name always in this place so dear to us both, and in its uplifting strains to be a memorial of his life. . . ."

This year of weddings was to contain other and very different matters: a trying legal adjustment of the elder daughter's affairs, which made the mother for the rest of her life a trustee for the beloved invalid, and the complicated, difficult final business phase of the relations with Leander and Robert Hall McCormick. After long negotiations, wherein Cyrus was the spokesman for his absent mother, a deal was concluded for the purchase of the Leander line's interests. It was a grave decision to make. "I feel its magnitude," Mrs. McCormick wrote, "its bearing on our interests for weal or woe!" Even a prosperous business, as this was, might stagger under an undertaking to pay the great sums that were in question. Finally an agreement was signed whereby the Leander McCormick family holdings were sold for \$3,250,000—\$600,000 to be paid in cash on the execution of the agreement and the rest in five notes, the first payable in less than a year, the others at yearly intervals.

When the papers were signed, Mrs. McCormick and Cyrus had a sense of release from a long-borne burden, even though the new load was heavy. There were to be anxiety and continual watchfulness. It may even be that the characteristic caution of Mrs. McCormick's business course was partly the result of this prolonged strain, with its background of fear that if they should fail the Leander line might get the business her husband had founded.

Chapter 13

THE BUSY NINETIES

IN THE late eighties and the nineties Mrs. McCormick lived much of the time in New York. Always seeking a way of life to benefit her invalid daughter, she secured for Virginia a camp in the Adirondacks and a house in New York, far up on the city's northwest side, near the Hudson River. The mother took endless pains in finding, buying, furnishing the house and then making the plans that set up a household there, with a physician in charge; endless pains in keeping that household rightly adjusted to her daughter's needs.

On another account she was for the better part of two school years, 1889-1891, a resident of New York. She took an apartment on Madison Avenue, so that the two boys might attend the Browning School and remain under her eyes. (She had never thought well of the separation of young children from parents, in boarding schools away from home, and the feeling held for her sons even in their upper teens.) They had been attending the University School in Chicago and were enrolled for a course preparatory to entering Princeton, when Mrs. McCormick learned of a project in New York that appealed to her. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., then about sixteen, had been withdrawn from school for a year for health reasons and his parents had secured an excellent tutor, John A. Browning, to teach him and his cousin Percy Rockefeller. Mrs. McCormick knew of John Browning, she admired the Rockefellers, and she asked to have her sons entered too. They were readily accepted. At least two others, Howard and Everett Colby, joined the group.

Now it happened that the Rockefeller back yard turned itself into an impromptu skating rink in the winter to the delight of

school and family; and this was the scene of the first meeting between Harold McCormick and Edith Rockefeller, who married a few years later.

Throughout their schooling the "little boys," despite the two and a half years' difference in their ages, moved together, though Stanley, reserved and quiet, had a greater interest in books than the active, sociable Harold and could have outstripped his brother. "They had to run and find me in the morning and catch me for school," Harold McCormick admitted, recalling his early years. And at the Browning School he took pains to arrange a schedule that left plenty of time for athletics. Both boys, for that matter, became fairly expert at tennis and they were to play together—"the McCormick brothers"—in many tournaments at Newport, Saranac, Bar Harbor. It was just before they entered the Browning School that a newspaper referred to them as "a *mélange* of tennis flannels, caps, tan shoes, racquets and activity, bright eyes and tanned cheeks." Both fine looking, they were unlike in type—Harold sturdier than Stanley, who was very tall and had his mother's delicate beauty.

Mrs. McCormick's life in these two years was not, it appears, one of social activity. For that matter, whether in Chicago or New York, though she entered into social life as much as her position required, society had little emphasis among her many interests. Now she saw close friends of earlier days—Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Potts, whom she had known at Genesee Wesleyan as Helen Hard, and others—and attended the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. But it was a quiet life, much interrupted by trips to Chicago, and fully occupied with the concerns of the family, the business, and philanthropies. There were visits to her daughter Mrs. Blaine during the months that she lived in Baltimore, especially a Christmas visit that included a brilliant dinner at the home in Washington of James G. Blaine, then Secretary of State, where at dessert time President Harrison and his daughter, Mrs. McKee, joined the party.

In the first summer of this New York period Mrs. McCormick, accompanied by her brother, Eldridge Fowler, took the two young boys for a summer abroad—London, the English Lakes, the Trossachs, Edinburgh—a trip that began beautifully but was halted by Stanley's suffering an eye infection. Mrs. McCormick improved the period of his convalescence by taking a new

treatment for her hearing, with little if any success. Meanwhile Harold pursued tennis on the Continent, later joining his uncle and Stanley in the delights of climbing Swiss mountains and visiting Italian lakes.

Before Mrs. McCormick returned she was a grandmother by grace of the arrival of McCormick (later to be renamed Emmons) Blaine, born in his mother's beloved childhood home on Rush Street. Three weeks later, when she was back in Chicago, the proud title was conferred again through the birth of Cyrus McCormick, first child of Cyrus and Harriet. She lamented her absence during this summer; but the trip had been planned in the interests of the "little boys," and the plan held.

All through the year 1890, wherever she was, Mrs. McCormick gave much time and thought to a project for consolidation of harvesting machine companies. This was the second time she had been involved in a projected combination, not to count the times when consolidation was only discussed. In 1883, before Mr. McCormick's death but after his wife had taken on increased responsibility in his affairs, there was a movement to unite the manufacturers of twine-binding harvesting machinery. A meeting was held at Niagara Falls and a committee was appointed to carry on. Mrs. McCormick sought the opinion of Mr. E. K. Butler, already important in the company and later to be its general manager. Mr. Butler feared that in a consolidation his company would be fettered in production, prices, management. Mrs. McCormick herself felt uncertain on this "knotty subject," and sent Cyrus off to negotiate without definite directions.

But presently she explained the whole thing to her husband, and the upshot was that she telegraphed to her son, awaiting decision, the message that "Father self think can't enter combination," and to Mr. Butler, more lightly, "We will go it alone." A day or two later she said that she was "breathing easier. . . . We cannot go into a partnership like that. For we would practically be tied hand and foot."

Now, seven years later, another consolidation plan on a much larger scale absorbed attention. Actually the American Harvester Company was formed but it never functioned and died an early death. This was a project launched by Colonel A. L. Conger, president of the Whitman & Barnes Manufacturing Company of

Akron, Ohio, from whom the harvesting machine companies bought knives and cutting sections. Wishing to preserve his own little industry, Conger approached a number of companies, both big and little, and induced them to agree to a consolidation, each setting a price on his own business and property. The one sound idea back of this scheme was the realization of danger in the fierce competition raging throughout the industry.

Though keenly aware of the perilous state of the reaper business, Mrs. McCormick was certainly not favorable to the new project. She dreaded "the consideration of what Conger is patching up," and urged that Cyrus and her brother should at least "be in at the first hatching of the scheme." Particularly she objected to taking in so many firms; eighteen were listed finally. Including the four largest was all that Mrs. McCormick had cared to contemplate.

Nevertheless she did not block the plan. The negotiations went forward during the summer, Cyrus, who was enthusiastic, keeping her informed. At various times Eldridge Fowler and Emmons Blaine shared in the consultations, and when Mrs. McCormick returned from abroad she joined in, coming sometimes from New York to Chicago apparently for that purpose. She attended at least one of the organization meetings when about twenty-five of the reaper men gathered in the Grand Pacific Hotel on a corner of Jackson Boulevard and Clark Street. She met them all and talked with them about the proposed company. It was one of this group, Mr. J. J. Glessner of Warder, Bushnell & Glessner, who said many years later that she knew the machine business as well as any of them.

Mr. Conger accepted the valuations without appraisal. And in November 1890 the American Harvester Company was organized with Cyrus H. McCormick as president and E. K. Butler as general manager. But grievous objections soon began to develop. Cyrus McCormick, elder son of Cyrus H. McCormick, names them in his account of this venture in *The Century of the Reaper*: "It soon became a matter of interesting inquiry how the new company was to find money to pay the fantastic valuations. . . . There was also immediate and widespread public opposition to this 'trust' as being an effort to flout the recently passed Sherman Law. It was also whispered about in the office that the widow of

the late inventor of the reaper would not willingly see his name submerged in the new company. Finally, there was no operating plan nor, most disastrous of all, was there any operating capital.”¹

By Christmas Mrs. McCormick was heavy-hearted about the whole business and told her mind to her son, her brother, her son-in-law, and to Mr. Butler. “Oh Mrs. McCormick,” Mr. Butler replied, “I am so sick of this thing. It looks dark enough to me. I tell you you saw further than any of us into the difficulties of this combine. Your words of objection ring in my ears all the time.” She talked with William Deering too. “I said to Mr. Deering that Christmas was a blue day with me—that the outlook was discouraging and . . . I was sorry I ever went into the combine and that if I had it to do over again I would not go into the combine. He replied neither would I . . . but he straightened up & looked at the bright side.”

Apparently Mrs. McCormick saw no bright side. She herself formulated “A plan for the peaceable dissolution of the American Harvester Company,” calling for a meeting of all the harvester men involved and a setting forth of difficulties and dangers. Each was to be asked to sign a paper withdrawing from the combine and accepting \$10,000 as balm.

Presumably this plan did not come to light. Events moved fast at the turn of the year, making it unnecessary. Mr. Deering appears suddenly to have seen the dark side. There are various accounts of the way in which he reached the point of belief and action. Perhaps the most convincing is Harold McCormick’s memory that Mr. Deering finally went to Mrs. McCormick and told her definitely that he would not have anything more to do with the project. Of course he met no resistance. Official action followed shortly. Early in 1891 a legal opinion was given to the effect that the consolidation was not legal anyhow, but “contrary to law and public policy.”

As for Mrs. McCormick, unquestionably her objections to the plan were sound, practical considerations; but beneath these was her deep reluctance, repeatedly shown, to sink the name McCormick under another company name. She wrote to Harold: “Dear boy I recall with a tender feeling your emotion at the thought of

¹ Cyrus McCormick, *The Century of the Reaper*, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931, p. 108.

losing our prestige—our name our identity— Now you have it all back Harold.”

Harold and Stanley entered Princeton together in the fall of 1891, starting under the amusing disadvantage of having too many advantages. Their older brother was a trustee, their mother was a friend of the president. The boys had the only room on the campus open to freshmen, the rest rooming in houses outside. As if that weren't enough to draw unwelcome publicity, their mother was at that time a guest in the home of former President McCosh and the boys visited her there. Not unnaturally their movements involved a pretty steady running of the sophomore gauntlet, with attendant indignities, including the plucking forth of shirt tails. All of this fell more heavily on Harold, whose resentment was more freely expressed. As far as possible the two kept their lovely mother in happy ignorance of their sufferings. A boyish reminder of their devotion to her is a prayer which came to light among her papers. It is dated February 12, 1892:

“Wilt Thou bless & keep our dear mother and may she enjoy many happy years with us. May she not worry about us at college, but may we do always what is right and leave college as much a Christian as we entered it, taking as our example our own dear father.”

As soon as they were launched, Mrs. McCormick returned to Chicago, to a house now empty of her children, except that Anita and Emmons Blaine with their little son were occupying it temporarily. Mr. Blaine had changed his business base to Chicago and they were looking for a house in Lake Forest or Evanston. Meanwhile Mr. Blaine had gone north in his father's campaign for the presidential nomination at the Republican convention held in early June at Minneapolis. James G. Blaine had resigned his high post as Secretary of State to make this final contest for the presidency. The effort failed; Harrison was nominated. On June 13 Emmons Blaine returned to Rush Street much worn and strained. Appendicitis—little understood then—struck, and in a few tense days defeated all the efforts of doctors, nurse, devoted wife, and her anxious mother. On June 18 Emmons Blaine died.

Through the desolate time that followed Anita Blaine bravely carried on her life, now centered in the adorable two-year-old who was presently called by his father's name.

That summer she took the boy to Bar Harbor. Here Mr. and Mrs. James G. Blaine had their summer home, Stanwood; and Mrs. McCormick spent some time with her daughter and the little grandson, eager to give whatever comfort and strength her presence might bring. In an unaddressed writing of hers she pictures them—the baby “enjoying the freedom he has to range through these tiny rooms from parlor to kitchen drawing his little wagon—the grassy lawn only just a step down from the porch and Miss Hammond & I happy to watch him. Soon his dear mother came to him & they were such a happy pair, alike dressed in white, and having good times together in mutual enjoyment—she feeling the meaning of the day—playing with—and anon pressing him to her heart.”

“The day” was the boy’s second birthday and the day of his christening—a sweet, sad scene at Stanwood. It is described in that writing just quoted—an informal, interlined writing:

“Anita herself arrays him in his simple white dress, with her own tender hand placing on him his father’s beautiful pearl . . . and taking him with her in the carriage off they drove . . . Miss Hammond & I following in another carriage.

“On arriving at Stanwood the devoted grandparents received these two dear ones with . . . hearts too full for words.

“The very few friends invited because of nearness to dear Emmons soon arrived and the entire party assembled in the drawing room all standing. At once Anita entered with baby in her arms—quiet but noticing all that passed and Dr. Harris began the sacred ceremony by reading the words our Saviour had spoken concerning little children . . . then as Dr. Harris began his prayer and he [Baby] saw Mrs. Blaine cover her eyes with her hand he said Grandma cry and indeed the tears of woe did flow from the eyes of this sorrowing heartbroken mother.²

“During the whole prayer he was quiet in his mothers arms—and how sad a figure it was—these two—standing there the mother there alone to accept for this dear child the promises & obligations implied in baptism.

“When Dr. Harris put the water on his head and pronounced the baptismal ceremony baby observed in silence every motion.

² Three of her children—Walker, Alice (Mrs. Coppinger), Emmons—had died within two and a half years.

When this was all done & the ceremony over Anita set him down on the floor & several came to take him by the hand and speak to him, which did not disconcert him. Then Mr. Blaine who had through the ceremony seemed almost overwhelmed with emotion, & was leaning with head bowed on the mantel, brought a little high silver covered book with clasp . . . and had all the witnesses inscribe their names."

There was a charming interlude in that autumn, of interest because it shows a lighter side of Mrs. McCormick's nature. She made a long-planned visit to Island Lake Camp, far up in the northwestern corner of Wisconsin. This bit of wilderness, of pines and white birch and sparkling water, forty miles from a post office and ten miles from anywhere, was owned jointly for several years by Dr. William C. Gray, editor of the *Interior*, and the McCormicks. It was Dr. Gray's find and Dr. Gray sang its praises in print. But the McCormicks loved it too, and long years after Dr. Gray's death they held these acres of forest and lake for occasional happy visits and for the use of Company employees, Seminary professors, and others in need of rest, recreation, solitude.

This fall, as Dr. Gray drove Mrs. McCormick in, he told her gravely that people who lived at the island were required to pay their way in work. She approved at once and inquired what manner of work would be assigned to her. The answer was gathering blueberries at the rate of ten cents a quart. She accepted the terms and the task, and in a few days Mrs. Gray took her in a buckboard about six miles through the woods to a valley that was fairly sky-blue with berries. As she sprang out of the carriage she stood gazing about her in amazement, then called for a basket and began gathering the berries in handfuls, stopping at intervals to admire fine bunches of great ferns. The guide was directed not to lose sight of her for a moment, lest, unable to hear voices, she might be lost. Soon she and Mrs. Gray each had a heaping basket, and Mrs. Gray mindful of the pitchy dark of woods on a moonless night said they should start back. "What," exclaimed Mrs. McCormick, waving an arm about the scene, "and leave all these blueberries?"

Arrived at camp she called for a measure, passed over five heaping quarts, and stood waiting for her pay. But Dr. Gray invented all sorts of evasions, said the berries were not marketable and, in his own words, "played the cheat and the rascal." As she retired

she said she did not see how a man could sleep who was trying to cheat a poor blueberry woman out of her wages.

Next morning, as Dr. Gray sat by the camp fire, he was seized by two pairs of stalwart hands that began hustling him down the path. "We have decided to impose imprisonment for debt and intend to lock you up in the root house," said the voice of one of Mrs. McCormick's young sons. Dr. Gray yielded, "and Mrs. McCormick, with an air of satisfied justice but without a smile, said 'I know how to deal with such characters,'" and took her fifty-cent piece. She afterward had one side of Mrs. Gray's coin planed off, suitably inscribed, set in a mat of blue velvet, and sent to Mrs. Gray as a souvenir.

Another incident of those days at the camp is of a different order. Near the center of the camp was a great torch, invisible from the lake because of the dense foliage; when it was lighted at night the Island appeared to be self-luminous, and the bright light striking on one side of the plummy foliage, while the other side was invisible in the darkness, produced a strange effect. "The first night that was overcast and wholly dark," Dr. Gray wrote, "Mrs. Gray invited Mrs. McCormick to allow herself to be taken out in a boat, and she consented. She enjoyed the unique spectacle, and then as we floated in the dark she began, in a sweet voice, to sing. The songs were old, and by the present living are forgotten. I said to Mrs. Gray, 'She has drifted back to her girlhood.' When she ceased I leaned back and was able to make her understand. 'I have not heard those songs for more than forty years.' 'Nor have I sung them before for more than forty years,' she said. To one who could appreciate it, this was a singularly fine incident. We were afloat under a black sky upon black water, and before us the quite peculiar spectacle of the torch light upon the pines. I thought it was the illuminated forest that had carried her thoughts back to scenes similarly illuminated by the light of joy and hope, far back in her memory."

The next summer was to bring an intensive experience as hostess—the summer of the World's Columbian Exposition. Like all prominent Chicagoans Mrs. McCormick was committed to it, deeply interested in the preparations. Months before the opening, she began planning a program that would give as many people as possible an opportunity to visit the white wonder city by the lake.

Five guest rooms were made ready and a schedule was worked out. Friends and relatives from New York City, Virginia, Richfield Springs, and Jefferson County were invited and many came. With great care she planned each day's trip for each guest who cared for help, and in the evening after dinner she would go from group to group, getting their impressions. She herself attended on various days, but little record has been found of her own special interests. She must have kept an eye on the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company's exhibit, including a gold plated and a silver plated machine.

Much stress was placed on entertaining the young sons' friends. Harold at any rate was concerned that the McCormicks should put their best foot forward. Before leaving Princeton he urged the preparation of guest rooms, paving the drive, provision of a trap, and the employment of a butler (Mrs. McCormick usually had a housekeeper) of good appearance, who could also serve as a valet "to keep the fellows' clothes in condition." His mother met most of his wishes, though a victoria took the place of the desired trap.

Among her entertainments of that summer was a reception to the members and friends of the Emma Willard Association. This organization, which held together the former pupils of Troy Female Seminary, had a headquarters and an exhibit at the Exposition. Mrs. McCormick probably could not do all they asked in the way of committee work, but she did give them a beautiful party. The house was fragrant with pink carnations and sweet peas, reflecting the Association's color. There was soft music. Refreshments were served by "lovely young girls in dreamy gowns" (thus the Association's ecstatic report); and Mrs. McCormick offered a charming welcome to all comers.

Concerning the total of her activities at this busy, thrilling time a fragmentary bit of writing records: "Such a succession of impressions and definite and careful attention to persons and things as I have gone through these weeks makes one dizzy."

Mrs. McCormick was among those who advocated allowing Dwight L. Moody to preach on the grounds—a proposal that was refused. Finding no space open to him there, Mr. Moody organized a vast network of meetings in Chicago. He and his helpers—including several foreign evangelists—spoke in theatres, halls, tents, hotel parlors, gospel wagons to the number at one time of a

hundred and twenty-five meeting places. These were strategically chosen, located not only on the prairies near the Fair grounds but also in unchurched areas throughout the city. On two Sunday mornings Mr. Moody filled the ten thousand capacity of Forepaugh's circus tent. There was every conceivable kind of gospel meeting for men, women, children, prisoners, and all the racial groups. Mrs. McCormick's approval of this campaign was spoken clearly in words, checkbook, attendance. She was very active on a day that Mr. Moody said was "the grandest day Chicago ever had." From the wings she looked out on the Moody service in the Haymarket Theatre, crowded from pit to dome; afterward she took Mr. Moody home and then at his request conducted Adolph Stoecker, German court preacher who was one of Mr. Moody's staff of foreign speakers, to his service at the Central Music Hall. Enthusiastic, she stayed for the later part of the service, conducted in German for Germans. And she was so impressed with the power of these meetings that she sent Mr. Moody an extra check for \$2500 after they ended.

She attended the Fair on that last tragic day when Mayor Harrison was assassinated. "What a great and awful calamity," she wrote. "How we pause in our brave statements about the glory and magnificence of this great city which has made the Fair! . . .

"The Fair closed as a rainy day closes—in silence and gloom!

"I was there yesterday—some of those pleasant avenues are filled with railroad tracks;—vast quantities of goods have already been packed up & the Fair has *already vanished!*

"The sunset was beautiful, though, and the buildings still stand in their magnificence."

Early in the nineties romance was abloom again. The warm friendship that developed between Edith Rockefeller and Harold McCormick flowered before long into love. As soon as the first tender buds became visible, Mrs. McCormick nourished the plant with all diligence. She was delighted when a telegram from Harold late in the May before his graduation told of the engagement by calling "yesterday" the happiest day of his life. The ardent attachment promised happiness for her adored son and she was very fond of the girl he had chosen—"Edith, whom I have loved all these years like my own child," she wrote ecstatically.

In addition Mrs. McCormick was undoubtedly attracted by the

prospect of an alliance between outstanding families. For Mr. Rockefeller Senior she maintained consistently the greatest respect, unclouded by any of the criticism that was sometimes his portion. She felt a congeniality with the family in religious and other matters. During his first visit at Cleveland as Edith's fiancé, Harold wrote to his mother: "I have so much to tell you of the home life of the family—a life directed on lines exactly parallel to those of your belief."

The engagement was announced early in June. Harold and Stanley were graduated from Princeton with Harold's betrothed and his mother proudly admiring. "In our circle," Mrs. McCormick wrote, "the chief interest has centered upon the three younger ones—Harold, Edith and Stanley—the devotion, modestly shown, of Harold and Edith,—the incidents of the closing of Harold and Stanley's college life—the moment of their going up with others, to receive their diplomas from the hand of President Patton—all these are the chief things in the picture for me. . . . How dear and precious our boys seemed at that moment, and how their faces reflected the hope that dwells in young hearts. How precious it seemed to have my boys lay their diploma into my hand as the culmination of my long effort for their education!"

Three days later Mrs. McCormick, accompanied by Anna Chapman, a great-niece of her husband, her friend Mrs. Sullivan, her son Stanley, and a nurse—for she was not well—sailed for a summer abroad. On the advice of Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Mrs. McCormick took the "cure" at Contrexéville, France, persuading a surprised resident, who had no thought of renting, to yield most of her house for the McCormick party, but giving her a new porch in the process—an incident characteristic of Mrs. McCormick's ability to get what she wanted.

After about two weeks at the resort Stanley returned to Paris, bound for the study of art. Undoubtedly he had a flair for painting and he had studied a little. Before the party left Paris for Contrexéville, his mother had been aware of his keen interest in developing his talent. They had become acquainted with some American art students and on Mrs. McCormick's own suggestion had visited Julien's studio, gathering information about arrangements. Stanley had wished to begin work at once but yielded to

his mother's wish that he take the waters first. His ambition held. His mother, though sympathetic with it, consented to his return only after she had assured herself of his safety in a pension conducted by an American woman who was making a home for her student son. "*It was now or never with Stan* as to his taking any lessons in drawing from those who *know* how to teach it," she said. Apparently the thought had not occurred to her that his deepest wish might be to continue the life of an artist.

After Contrexéville came happy days in and about Interlaken and Lucerne and in Austria—delightful drives, in a great carriage with the driver's seat high aloft. These were gay, light-hearted trips—long days through glorious scenery, nights at primitive little inns with large courtyards—light-hearted even before the happy Harold, newly arrived from home, joined the party. Part of the time after that Harold followed along on a bicycle, part of the time his mother and he drove alone, while Mrs. Sullivan and Anna Chapman were Mrs. McCormick's enraptured guests on a trip by themselves into Italy.

Mrs. McCormick stayed longer than originally planned for the sake of Stanley's study. Stanley himself debated the wish to stay (" . . . there is nothing which I should rather do than to pursue art here this winter") against the thought that he should get in a law course as a preparation for "relieving Brother" in the business as soon as possible. Finally there was a postponement of the law course and Stanley studied until a late sailing.

In Paris mother and sons were engrossed in the choice of emeralds to be the bridegroom's gift to his bride and planning Mrs. McCormick's own gown, a matter into which the whole family entered. It marked a departure from the usual black, a lovely soft gray silk brocade.

The wedding took place shortly after their return, on November 26th. Not, however, at the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church as the invitations read but in the McCormicks' hotel apartment. Harold was a convalescent from pleurisy and his physician forbade him to go out. So the apartment was decorated with flowers and palms, the guests were notified, and, as Mrs. McCormick described it to friends:

"The wedding took place at the exact hour named, with all the joy and brightness that could possibly have attended the first

arranged plan. And there was the added joy of feeling that Harold was safe.

"Edith came, wearing her plain but handsome wedding gown of white satin, with the point lace veil her sister wore at her marriage, accompanied by her father, into the parlor where Harold accompanied by Stanley was awaiting her. The ceremony was most impressive . . . and the bridal pair looked so handsome and so happy when receiving the hearty congratulations of those present.

"At the appointed time all, except Harold, went to the bride's home, where she, with her father by her side, under the canopy of flowers, received hundreds who came to offer their congratulations. This, too, was a beautiful scene, and Edith was most courageous, feeling keenly not having Harold at her side yet feeling there was nothing else right to do but to receive the guests:—and she stood there calm, and sweet, and dignified until all the guests had been received.

"Then she put on her going-away dress, and, leaving her bridal bouquet with her brides-maids, returned to the apartments at the Buckingham (from which I had moved out, leaving the suite to the young people)—and they commenced their little housekeeping there, on their own hook and so all ended well."

Chapter 14

FAMILY OF TWO

SOON after the McCormick-Rockefeller wedding was over Mrs. McCormick and her only child still at home had their special time together. She and her son Stanley turned straight back to Europe, sailing in less than a fortnight for Italy on the way to Egypt. The particular object of the trip was to build up Stanley's health.

There followed a time of as complete relaxation as Mrs. McCormick had ever known—a luxurious voyage of several weeks in a chartered dahabeah, from Minieh up the Nile to Assouan and back. The party included only Mrs. McCormick, Stanley, a physician-companion, and a maid. Their boat, the *Sesostris*, offered the comfort of a deck fitted up like a drawing room, where they spent long hours in the sun watching the shifting panorama of the great river highway of Egypt and its colorful banks, Stanley sometimes taking time away from the boat to sketch. They visited massive ruins, Roman and Egyptian. Of Karnak, “which held our interest most warmly,” Mrs. McCormick wrote in a journal (the only resumption of journal writing after 1878): “I cannot describe the wonder and the admiration I felt in seeing the hypostyle hall—the most lofty and the largest room in the world. While I stood there in the forest of columns, 128 it is said, I tried in vain to realize what forty centuries meant.”

At Assiut Mrs. McCormick visited schools in which she saw hope for Egypt—a story to be told in the account of her foreign mission interests.

They were in Cairo when five ancient boats, shortly before found buried together near the Great Pyramid, arrived. As soon as it was known that the Egyptian Government would part with one, Mrs. McCormick bought it for the Field Museum.

After Egypt Mrs. McCormick and Stanley spent a happy time with the bride and groom, Harold and Edith, in Rome and for a climax they took "a little Alpine experience," with Paris as journey's end. Leaving by way of Milan, they crossed Lake Maggiore at a perfect hour, in a perfection of light, and traveled onward by carriage through an "endless panorama" of mountain beauty—"every way the most superlatively fine journey we ever took."

For about two months and a half they stayed in Paris while Stanley took singing lessons under a fine master. It was an ambition that his mother endorsed because, aside from cultivating a good voice, it would tend to widen his chest and develop his lungs—"a matter of supreme importance to him." She stayed with him, happily. But she could not face his remaining without her. After the weeks of study they took another driving and walking tour (not much walking for Mrs. McCormick) in Swiss mountains. At Martigny Stanley fell ill, so ill that they remained for weeks. With convalescence his ambition to resume singing lessons and—a far deeper ambition—to study art returned strongly. His mother admired his purpose—" 'Live a semi-loafing life at 135 Rush St., I cannot, Mother,' he says, and for this we should honor him." But when he said that if she must go home he could still stay, she showed deep hurt. "I did not think during those nights of fever that he could possibly feel *that* sentiment. . . . I thought at that time that we should be in accord on the subject of soon going home together." She was fearful of the Paris winter, but when Stanley asks how much better is Chicago in that regard she "cannot answer that, except to say that it would be *home* and among his dear ones, and that is a good deal."

The outcome, through whatever arguments the path led, was that Stanley sailed for home with his mother. But even before they left she wrote to Cyrus, who had urged his brother's return, that Stanley had a plan, formed on the impulse of letters from home which had helped to clear his vision and deepen his own convictions. She believed he had clung to the idea of art study and singing for his health, and that idea had passed. She was probably wrong about that. Though health was a factor in his study of singing and he had no thought of a musical career, it appears that a conflict continued between his urge to be an artist and his sense of responsibility to the family business—a conflict that physi-

cians were later to feel contributed to bringing on mental illness.

As for the plan it was no doubt the purchase of a Western ranch of high altitude where he could improve his health and at the same time have satisfying occupation for a time. Eventually, but not at once, he carried out this plan.

Again in Chicago Mrs. McCormick resumed full control of the many-stranded interests awaiting her. Much had happened, much lay before her. Mrs. Blaine and her young son were installed in the fine house she had been building when her mother left, its front windows looking out across Erie Street on to the south windows and lawn of her old home. Harold McCormick was definitely in the business now. He and his wife had set up housekeeping in Council Bluffs, Iowa, where he was learning the agency end of his father's and his own life work.

The first household of Edith and Harold drew much of Mrs. McCormick's loving thought, all the more when a few weeks after her return their first child was born—the fifth in her grandmotherly quiverful. Now there were Cyrus and Elizabeth and Gordon in her eldest son's household, Emmons in Mrs. Blaine's, John Rockefeller in Harold and Edith's, with Fowler, Muriel, Editha, Mathilde in the future. She was a fond and devoted grandmother, always concerned about the children's well-being, perhaps a shade too visibly at times; always ready to step in when she could help; always adored by them, little or larger.

Many business matters, especially those of shared family interest, had been referred to Mrs. McCormick abroad and she had given her vote or her decision by letter or cable. Among these was a family decision to endow the chair of jurisprudence at Princeton as the McCormick contribution to that university's sesquicentennial fund. Cyrus was strongly for it particularly because the chair was already occupied by his brilliant classmate, Woodrow Wilson. The gift was made in the name of "Mrs. McCormick and her sons," endowing the chair which was to be occupied by Woodrow Wilson until he became president of Princeton in 1910. Mrs. McCormick was always his warm admirer and friend. When he was President of the United States she used to send him clippings that she thought he should see, and always she received courteous notes of thanks. During his presidency of Princeton, he was once Mrs. McCormick's guest at her home, and Fletcher Brockman, a

Young Men's Christian Association leader, also a guest, recalled his impression of "these two master minds discussing the great questions of the day. I could readily observe," he continued, "that Wilson had profound respect for her opinions, and he spoke with an unaccustomed enthusiasm and lack of reserve. . . . She seemed almost his equal in her grasp of the implications, although this came out more by her searching questions to him than by her own statements."

A formidable pile of applications for aid awaited the returned travelers. And the procession of earnest callers began to move up and down the Rush Street steps again. Letters and callers disclosed progress or need in various institutions that Mrs. McCormick was already helping, and other causes presented their pleas. Even excluding the widely known leaders who came, there were always spokesmen for hospitals, homes for children, homes for women—erring, aged, or otherwise—schools, colleges, evangelistic missions, settlements, ministers of several denominations, and a hundred and one agencies for relief and betterment.

Looking at Chicago alone, a few stand out in the procession of those who in these late nineties came and received—not always largely, but with the sympathetic interest that was so marked a characteristic of Mrs. McCormick's giving.

There was the frail, devoted Mrs. Clarke of the historic Pacific Garden Mission (not far from "Hinky Dink's" saloon), who, sharing the work with her husband until his death and then carrying on alone, spent something like thirty-nine years of nightly working attendance at the Mission. Years later Mrs. McCormick was to say: "Once it was so that visitors staying at our home felt that they had not really seen Chicago until they had spent an hour with the great work of those heavenly ministers of goodness, Colonel and Mrs. Clarke."

There was Mrs. Matilda B. Carse of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, who spoke for several of its activities—day nurseries, homes for women, kindergarten, and the famous Temple. Mrs. McCormick helped irregularly with the Union's rescue missions and nurseries from an early day. Her papers disclose no gift to the Temple—that beautiful structure, with the fine idea behind it of focusing temperance activities and financing a business building at the same time. It went up, but it was finan-

cially disappointing. Mrs. McCormick's course between a large conditional pledge and the closing of the subject without her contribution is not wholly clear. One suspects the influence of her son Cyrus, the business man.

In the late nineties Norman B. Barr entered the picture, keeping Mrs. McCormick in close touch with developments at Olivet Memorial Church. This undertaking in the lower North Side river district was an outgrowth of city mission work commenced by McCormick Theological Seminary students which she had aided long before Mr. Barr's time—first as a mission, then as a Presbyterian church. It served a population largely of foreign working people—Scandinavian, German, Irish—living on very low wages in little primitive frame houses hurriedly built just after the Chicago Fire. Early its leaders had become convinced that the approach to these needy people must be by direct, personal aid. Kindergarten and day nursery were first steps and steps that Mrs. McCormick approved. But institutional work was not popular with presbyteries at that time and the going was hard. For a year the social service work was carried on at one point, the religious work at another.

When that proved unsuccessful, the fusion of the two began under the leadership of a young Seminary student, Norman B. Barr, and it was this idea that he took to Mrs. McCormick. He found prompt and intelligent response to this project which then was ahead of the times. Mr. Barr believed that he was working "temporarily" on this task. He retired some forty years later, leaving an institution of manifold activities, the heart and center of its neighborhood; and Mrs. McCormick went along with him to the end of her life.

Some one from Glenwood Manual Training School must have come up the steps. Glenwood was already in Mrs. McCormick's interest—a school and home for homeless boys. If not now then later the calls would have been made by Mrs. Charles A. Spring, Jr., whose husband, for so long general superintendent of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, was for a number of years before his death the anonymous angel of the school.

There were still about three years in which the sturdy figure of Dwight L. Moody could have mounted the Rush Street steps. And this brings us to an incident that has been told on many plat-

forms. In the summer of 1897 Mr. Moody was holding meetings in Chicago, aided by Mr. Torrey. They cost much money and one morning Mr. Torrey woke to find Mr. Moody bending over him. "Torrey," he said, "we need more than \$3,000. Let's pray for it." They did. During the day Mrs. McCormick felt strongly impelled to meet some need of Mr. Moody's. She wrote a check for \$3,000, sent it to the meeting by an urgent messenger, who insisted on handing the envelope to Mr. Moody on the platform. Opening it, he immediately told the audience of his answered prayer.

A vital religious interest that had just got under way in 1895 belongs in this account of the late nineties. Sometime in that year Mrs. McCormick had undertaken to aid the work of creating in churchless pioneer fields Sunday schools out of which Presbyterian churches might grow. She agreed to support one active missionary on the northern Minnesota frontier. The man chosen was the Reverend Samuel A. Blair, a modest, quiet, devout man capable of any sacrifice to further his work, who became "her missionary for Duluth presbytery." She paid his salary from 1895 to the end of her life and followed his travels carefully. They were long journeys on foot that only a strong, devoted man could have endured, sometimes in snow and mud. On his first trip to Bemidji, up near the source of the Mississippi, sixty miles had to be covered on foot and by canoe with a guide. Timber wolves were in sight near their camping spot. But in the pioneer town, the center of a community of perhaps three hundred people, a meeting was held—the first religious service in Bemidji and the first in Beltrami County outside of an Indian reservation.

Mr. Blair's letters and those of his chief, Robert F. Sulzer, were filled with the color of a new country where settlements, containing large foreign elements, were far separated. They had the color too of Christian devotion to a difficult task full of hardships, of its rich rewards in schools and churches planted as centers of influence, and in changed lives counted by hundreds.

There were other causes—other feet on the steps, other voices, far too numerous to mention, though Mrs. McCormick's giving was not yet at full tide. Some causes, because of their expansion into major interests, call for separate treatment. To keep the threads interwoven, we mention these: her adoption, a few months after his return, of the beginning international work for students

of young John R. Mott—his going up and down those steps was to be momentous; and a new phase of her work for the Southern Mountain Schools, springing from her own visit to Tusculum. Expansion of her lifelong interest in foreign missions was to come a little later.

Of course the steps to the Rush Street door were mounted by personal friends and social acquaintances too. Mrs. McCormick's card tray held outstanding names in Chicago society—Blackstone and Blair, Lincoln and Ryerson, Palmer and Rumsey, and many others. There were a few neighbors and special friends who came; but her life was too crowded for much visiting detached from other interests.

Among her good friends in Chicago was Marshall Field, whom the McCormicks had known well when they were in New York in the sixties. Mr. McCormick had received, and declined, an invitation to become a partner of young Marshall Field. Nannie Scott Field had leaned on Mrs. McCormick's sympathy in her despairing grief over the death of her first child, and in following years, before her own death in 1896, poured out her sufferings to "Dearest Nettie" in letters and calls. Mr. Field and Mrs. McCormick shared various interests, and both she and her son Cyrus sometimes sought Mr. Field's opinion. He often called on Sunday afternoons; there was correspondence and at Christmas Mrs. McCormick sent Mr. Field handsome gifts, and he sent her American beauty roses. Once he wrote: "I often think and have many times said, that you are the most remarkable woman of my acquaintance." Their friendship was to continue pleasantly through the years until his death abroad in 1906.

In May of 1897 care for her invalid daughter took Mrs. McCormick again from home. For some time she had felt that California was the ideal residence for Virginia and had fixed on the vicinity of Santa Barbara as the right spot. During two seasons Miss McCormick had been living there with her attendants in a rented house. Now her mother believed they should build, and for eighteen months at a stretch and other weeks later she superintended, sometimes with the efficient aid of her son Stanley, the construction of house and grounds. Her experience with the Rush Street house and Clayton Lodge, as well as various other buildings, had sharpened a natural aptitude to a fine point. Architects and build-

ers alike testified to her ability, and—sometimes perhaps with groans as well as admiration—to her persistence in seeking perfection. The beauty of the estate known as Riven Rock—from a great cleft rock, its landmark—must have been a satisfaction, though the invalid daughter was to spend little time there. Indeed, Stanley, who did much to create it, was to spend far more time at Riven Rock, in clouded health, than did his sister.

While Mrs. McCormick was at Montecito her son Cyrus went out to get her final word on a new question of consolidation. Under the pressure of desperate competitive conditions the Deerings had given the McCormicks an option on buying their plant, and figures (enormous figures) were mentioned. Of course there had been many conferences in Chicago involving all three of the McCormick brothers and much correspondence between Chicago and Montecito. Mrs. McCormick's first reaction had been, as it always was to the idea of consolidation, unfavorable. Meantime the problem of where the McCormicks were to get the necessary money was upon them. They could swing the deal by a bond issue, but sufficient cash was not available. Asking for advice, not financing, they turned to Mr. Rockefeller, and son-in-law Harold McCormick went with Cyrus H. McCormick to present the matter. Mr. Rockefeller was interested, responsive, not prepared to commit himself until his own appraiser could study the entire McCormick set-up. Thus encouraged, Cyrus McCormick undertook to consult the other members of the family whose consent was necessary to action. In Montecito he won his mother's reluctant consent to the negotiations, never her enthusiastic support.

As matters progressed, Mr. Rockefeller asked to meet the leading McCormick Harvesting Machine Company department heads. The meeting took place, as Mr. Rockefeller wished, without any McCormick brother sharing; and the financier decided that before he could enter this business, as he wished to do, there must be some housecleaning.

It was a summer in which the tide of prosperity mounted. Both the McCormicks and the Deerings could feel greater confidence in their own futures. How much effect this actually had is hardly measurable; but that fall, in an amicable interview, Cyrus McCormick gave up the project for the time being. He wrote to his mother: "It is needless for me to say that our feeling in coming to

this decision has been greatly strengthened by the position you have taken from time to time. . . . I am sure that this information will be pleasing to you, for although you acquiesced in our plans, as they then stood, there is no doubt that your judgment has been against the move from the beginning."

By this time Harold McCormick was well into the business and before long the youngest son entered too—first doing intermittently things that might be helpful, later holding office and keeping to a grueling office schedule. He had reduced the place of art in his life to occasional sketching; he had completed a short law course at Northwestern; and after weeks on horseback Stanley and a friend had found a ranch. Here, near Cimarron, New Mexico, this son of wealth and machinery became absorbed in buying and herding cattle. His mother approved, sufficiently; but no doubt his entrance into the family business gave her the deepest gratification. The clear destiny of her husband's sons was the great business that he had created. There Stanley as well as Cyrus and Harold belonged and there Stanley's own conscientiousness put him.

Another family event of the late nineties that thrilled Mrs. McCormick was her daughter Anita's gift to found the Chicago Institute—a school for the education of children through the academic grades and for the training of teachers. It was the first undertaking in Mrs. Blaine's large contribution to progressive education in Chicago. Her mother wrote an ecstatic letter of praise about the time the gift was made known: "You are doing a great and inestimable good to your race. Harold said, 'Oh, is it not grand, what Anita has done!' And it is grand beyond all computation."

Chapter 15

MOTHER OF THE SEMINARY

SOON after her return to Chicago late in 1896 Mrs. McCormick no doubt went eagerly to the campus of McCormick Theological Seminary to see the new library. It was her gift, completed in accordance with her plans in her absence, and at her request the building was named for her daughter the Virginia Library.

At the dedication Cyrus H. McCormick had read a letter that his mother, with the cooperation of Stanley, had written in Italy and sent on to be her word at the ceremony. Naturally and as always she referred to her husband:

"To no one . . . would the library be a greater joy than to my dear and honored husband, who stood by the Seminary through storm and cloud. The impulse to build this new home for the books came from a wish to carry forward his work. . . ."

This classic white marble library is one of a group of buildings on that North Side campus which give an effect of quietness in the midst of city noise. In that secluded part of it called Chalmers Place two rows of pleasant houses face each other across a smooth, velvety lawn set with trees. These are the homes of faculty members of the Seminary and other houses belonging to that institution. Two of the Seminary's academic buildings partly close in the east end of the Place, while a modern gray stone commons building, a modern gymnasium, and a dormitory new in 1950, lie to the west. Between Chalmers Place and busy Halsted Street stand the older buildings of the Seminary with their own grassy lawn. For many years three dignified faculty houses dating from the eighties faced the street.

From early in her marriage until her death this institution occupied a leading place in Mrs. McCormick's affection. Thus it de-

serves a place here without dependence on chronology—crossing the lines of her other interests and her personal life.

When she came back from Washington in 1859 with her first baby, the land was waiting for the Seminary that was to be re-created. It was open prairie, occupied by the wind. When she hurried back from the East to a Chicago still burning, in October, 1871, its one tall building stood there safe, just beyond the line of the flames; stood in the midst of prairies and cabbage patches and, still, the wind. The story of the founding of this "Presbyterian Seminary of the North-West" in Chicago by Cyrus Hall McCormick and its turbulent early years has already been told. Upon Mr. McCormick's death his family took it on as a dear heritage of obligation, confirmed when the directors renamed it McCormick Theological Seminary—the name that it bore until a few years after his widow's death and now bears again.

As to her husband, so to her the institution was a "school of the prophets," designed to send into the world a constant stream of young preachers trained in sound doctrine and devoted to service.

Its buildings are a standing record of the family's interest. The earliest building, Ewing Hall, and the latest, Alumni Hall, alone were erected without McCormick aid. McCormick Hall, a dormitory, was the inventor's gift in the last year of his life. Another was built by Mrs. McCormick and her son Cyrus during their executorship of Mr. McCormick's will, when the two other dormitories had overflowed; and the Seminary won her permission to name it in her honor Fowler Hall. The library was Mrs. McCormick's gift alone, while the gymnasium, for which she made the basic contribution, was erected after her death.

To each building in addition to money she had given uncounted hours in consultations with architects, builders, Seminary committees, furnishers, and in personal inspection, out of which came many a sound criticism or wise suggestion on her part. Those who knew her ways closely have said, with pardonable exaggeration, that she knew every stick and brick in any building that she gave. Certainly she knew the lore of blueprints and specifications and had a talent for proportion and right arrangement.

Chalmers Place owes its existence to her. Rental houses were the chosen investment for Seminary funds. In the late eighties the Seminary greatly needed more income and therefore more houses.

So Mrs. McCormick and Cyrus contributed from the estate both the amount of the deficit for the year 1888-89 and \$100,000 to build fifteen houses. The plan for arranging them on either side of a parked street was Mrs. McCormick's. So were, if not actually the designs, at least the general plan and many details of the houses. And the good old Presbyterian name of Chalmers was her choice.

Her interest was not confined to the houses, either. The private street was to be made beautiful and Mrs. McCormick, always a lover of trees, elected herself to the task. Upon a wintry day her carriage drove up to the door of No. 10 Chalmers Place. It was accompanied by a large dray loaded with sizable trees. As she went up the front steps her coachman walked beside her carrying a pair of immensely tall rubber boots. In Jessie Harvey Robinson's parlor she put them on and announced that she was going to superintend the planting. As she had only one pair of boots she would not allow Mrs. Robinson to go out with her. All that morning she stood there in the snow, erect and graceful, in her incongruous boots until she had seen the roots safely placed where she meant them to be.

In all the McCormick family gave to this institution founded in Chicago by their head about four million dollars—the last million, on endowment, a memorial to Mrs. McCormick. Besides the buildings and furnishings there was a steady outgo for deficits, repairs, alterations, and refurnishing; special pledges; the establishment of a fellowship and scholarships; aid to city mission work; money for books; and large contributions from time to time to the endowment. Not to mention such charming incidentals as flowers for special occasions, and numerous gifts.

Mrs. McCormick interested herself in everything—properties, professors, students; in soundness at once of dormitory roofs, of health, and of doctrine. She was always intimately involved in the selection of the faculty. The degree of her influence would be difficult to determine; but evidently it was considerable. When a chair fell vacant, there would be a long consideration of many names. And she would share in the discussions, first of all with her son Cyrus who was Special Director in his father's place, then with members of the nominating committee, with directors and professors.

More than once Cyrus went forth to explore the merits of a prospective professor or to support a call with persuasion, while

Mrs. McCormick kept in close touch. She was, for instance, warmly in sympathy with the quest for Dr. Andrew C. Zenos in the spring of 1891. Mrs. McCormick and Cyrus had known this brilliant young man when he taught the classical form of his native tongue, Greek, at Lake Forest University. Now that the chair of Biblical History was vacant, the Seminary and the McCormicks sought to draw him from the Congregational Seminary at Hartford, Connecticut to Presbyterian McCormick.

When word came that Dr. Zenos was torn by conflicting claims, Cyrus took train for Hartford straight from breakfast and no doubt consultation with his mother in New York. He spent pleasant hours in the Zenos household and entered into the problems that halted decision. One of these was the inferiority of McCormick's library, which was accommodated in a corner of the chapel. Mr. McCormick promised to supply the lack. Then he returned to his mother for a few hours which, he wrote her, were "delightful and stimulating."

The next month Dr. Zenos accepted the call and in the autumn began the fifty years of service to the Seminary as professor, dean, and dean emeritus which constitute one of its greatest glories.

Mrs. McCormick's judgment of people was keen and sound; and the tests she applied to candidates were dictated by consideration of the Seminary's welfare. "I judge," wrote one with a worthwhile opinion, "that Mrs. McCormick had two special concerns about the Seminary—that all its teachers should have a definite conviction lying within the accepted evangelical field, and that they be men of such personality that the students would not need to get past them in order to become vigorous ministers of the gospel." So far as known, there was no instance of actual dictation on her part, no assumption of a *right* to control.

There was perhaps a special consideration when the chair to be filled was the one named for Mr. McCormick, the chair of Systematic and Polemic Theology. Only once in Mrs. McCormick's time was it filled by some one not approved to the faculty by her husband personally. This was in 1911, when Dr. Willis G. Craig, a man of Mr. McCormick's choosing who had been transferred to this chair from another after Mr. McCormick's death, retired. There followed the usual wide and careful search. Finally, according to a faculty story, the special committee appointed by the di-

rectors narrowed the list down to five or six names and took the list to Mrs. McCormick. She looked at it and said, pointing, "That's the man I want." He was Cleland B. McAfee, one of the sons in the Park College family of McAfees, well known to Mrs. McCormick since his young manhood and particularly during a Chicago ministry. Now he was coming from a Brooklyn pastorate and was to occupy the chair until long after Mrs. McCormick's death.

In the nineties Mrs. McCormick took definite part in a controversy that affected all the Presbyterian theological seminaries in the country. It was a question of a change in their charters and it followed, as a sequel, an agitating controversy over the trial of Dr. Charles A. Briggs for heresy.

With that trial Mrs. McCormick of course had nothing to do, but in her relation to the *Interior* she had something to say about its presentation to Presbyterian readers. Years before, when Dr. Gray, its editor, had taken a half interest with Mr. McCormick in the paper, provision had been made that in case of difference of opinion on policy Mr. McCormick's word should be final, but that this should not carry on to his heirs. Yet Dr. Gray had always held himself in honor bound to print nothing that he thought Mrs. McCormick would disapprove and to submit any doubtful question to her. Now a great issue was at stake.

The trouble began with an inaugural address delivered by Dr. Charles A. Briggs on the occasion of his transfer from one chair to another on the faculty of Union Theological Seminary in New York. Shortly after the publication of the inaugural address Mrs. McCormick had expressed to Cyrus the opinion that Dr. Briggs had "laid himself out for *trial for heresy*." When the Presbytery of New York took action looking to a trial, Mrs. McCormick wrote to her son:

"This is a time when we would do ourselves great injustice to let the *Interior* take any stand whatever on this great question without an accord between Dr. Gray and ourselves. . . . The paper that supported Patton in his trying hour should not make a mistake now, though we are not parties to the matter directly."

In this she was hewing to the line of loyalty to her husband's opinions. For in the mid-seventies Mr. McCormick had been active in the trial of Professor David Swing on heresy charges brought by Dr. Patton, then of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of

the North-West. The expression "in his trying hour," applied to the prosecutor rather than the accused, shows her acceptance of that side of the earlier controversy.

For two years the Briggs case followed an intricate, turbulent course. The theological offenses charged against Dr. Briggs were the expression of such beliefs as the so-called "Higher Critics" were to make widely familiar: questioning the supremacy of the Bible as the source of authority in faith and conduct; denial of the inerrancy of the Scriptures; the view that Moses did not write all of the Pentateuch and that there was more than one Isaiah.

Mighty men of theology ranged themselves on each side, supporting, attacking—some with dignified scholarship, some with a clear feeling for justice, some with un-Christian rancor. Dr. Briggs had solemnly pronounced words of loyalty to the official Presbyterian beliefs before making his address. And though he did not hesitate to admit some of the views attributed to him, he maintained that none was out of harmony with the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The outcome was that the General Assembly of 1891 refused to approve the election of Dr. Briggs to his chair; and Union Theological Seminary ended by cutting its Presbyterian ties. In two trials of Dr. Briggs before the Presbytery of New York the first vote was to dismiss the case in the interests of peace, the second an acquittal. But the General Assembly of 1893 overthrew that verdict and suspended Dr. Briggs from the Presbyterian ministry.

All this in great detail was faithfully reported in the *Interior*, both points of view being represented. Dr. John DeWitt of McCormick was the sharpest critic of Dr. Briggs. Later, as the battle raged, Dr. Herrick Johnson entered the lists in the interest, not of either side, but of fair play and justice. Dr. Gray's own editorials were without strong partisan tone, and as the controversy grew more bitter he concentrated on the promotion of peace in the Church. In May, 1891 he wrote to Mrs. McCormick:

"My feeling has been of deep antagonism to the Briggs school. But I am free to confess that I abhor the spirit of religious persecution. . . .

"Now my desire is to follow the things that make for peace. . . .

"The Bible is in no more 'danger' than the sunlight. God does not require us to keep the sun and the Bible shining. He wants us

to enter into the light of both, and warm ourselves, and guide our steps."

Mrs. McCormick's writings contain few expressions on the Briggs case. But after the Assembly had acted in 1891, she wrote: "The Assembly has spoken, but that voice does not arrest the march of Professor Briggs' teachings. They will go on! I trust they may not split the church." That Mrs. McCormick did not, however, allow the controversy to take on wrong proportions is clear from a conversation between herself and Thomas C. Hall. "Tom" Hall, son of the eminent preacher, John Hall, was then her pastor. He had upheld Dr. Briggs and had been greatly shaken by the final verdict. Mrs. McCormick tried to give him perspective: "I . . . begged him to wait in silence and in patience until the smoke of the battle should clear away a little and he could see the field; and I compared this strife to a small storm on the bosom of the mighty deep, which had not really disabled or dismantled our great and noble Presbyterian ship."

In following years Mrs. McCormick did not protest as gradually, quietly, the methods of the Higher Criticism were introduced at the Seminary she loved. As in other interests the opinions of those she had come to trust influenced her. Of chief importance among these influences, undoubtedly, was Dr. Zenos, whose wide range of scholarship and rare personality she deeply admired. Professor at different periods of Church History and of Historical Theology (and capable, it was often said, of filling any chair in the Seminary), Dr. Zenos had the great gift of speaking the truth "not with a shout of defiance, but in love." One of the first in the seminaries to employ the methods of the Higher Criticism, he taught in this spirit and with sure protection for the great fundamentals.

Speaking reminiscently of Mrs. McCormick's acquiescence in the newer views, Dr. Zenos said:

"When we began to have courses in Higher Criticism she accepted that with toleration. I did introduce courses in which the new point of view came to be first tolerated and later practically accepted. It was essentially gradual and tactful. I hope so. The present trend is all in that way. We don't fight anything because it is new. We examine. If we find it must be accepted—all right. . . . Mrs. McCormick might have said: 'My dear husband if he had

lived in the time when this all happened would have approved of it. In his day the whole debate was discussed in a certain narrow kind of light in which things could not be seen any other way. But the new light that has come enables us to see it in a different way. If my dear husband had been living now he would have tolerated and approved the same thing.' "

In the "sequel" to the Briggs case, in so far as the McCormick Theological Seminary was involved, Mrs. McCormick's part was direct and telling.

It was in a state of mind induced by the Briggs case and the action of Union Theological Seminary that the General Assembly of 1892 announced its belief "that the church should have direct connection with and control over its theological seminaries." It appointed a committee to study the subject.

The Briggs case gave off too much sound and heat for full discussion of the new subject in 1892. But when the 1894 Assembly met, the Seminary question rivaled the Briggs case in temperature. Under most of the seminary charters an election of professor or director might be vetoed by the next succeeding Assembly. Now the majority report proposed a startling increase in the Assembly's power; unless the next succeeding Assembly should approve an election, it would not be valid. Further, the majority report recommended that the seminaries be asked to declare all their property (eight million dollars' worth of it) held in trust for the church. The minority report pointed out the evils of such centralization. Debate was long drawn out and prickly.

When at last it ended, the Assembly voted 443 to 115 in favor of the majority report. A committee was sent out to ask each seminary to agree to alter its charter as proposed. It was only in the spring of 1895, as the time approached for the Seminary directors to reply, that Mrs. McCormick entered the controversy. Dr. Gray urged her to write to the directors. He saw a deadly likeness between the present situation and that in the sixties when New School forces in the Assembly had all but wrested the control of the Seminary from the hands of C. H. McCormick and his friends. "I never can consent," Dr. Gray wrote Cyrus, "to surrender what it cost your father four years of sorrow and pain to secure."

Mrs. McCormick devoted much time and thought to preparing her course. One evening she drove over to Halsted Street to see Dr.

Craig, in the pleasant house that Mr. McCormick had built. She listened carefully to his arguments, but was not convinced. Presently she sent him a draft of the letter she proposed to send to the directors, together with a longer covering letter.

Her letter to the directors read, in part:

"I hear with regret of the proposition to change the charter of McCormick Seminary. . . .

"After careful examination of the question we feel that, as far as lies in our province, we must strongly oppose any change of the charter. . . ."

The longer letter to Dr. Craig shows the thinking that lay back of the formal expression:

"Now it seems to me that in all human affairs, it is the few that control, even when the greater number have the name of controlling. The General Assembly, as a great body, does not handle or decide difficult questions. These are, in the end, decided by a small group—a Committee—and that group is generally controlled by a *master mind*.

"Now it seems to me I would rather trust the group that has long managed this Seminary, and has been devoted to its interests, and made sacrifices for it, than to give more power to the General Assembly,—or a new group of its creation, who have not the parent's love for it, and might lay rash hands on its teachers, and its property. . . . It is a huge question,—and two years seems not enough to get all the bearings of it, and to see how to save the Seminaries, for all time, from going wrong!"

The letter to the directors was well received. So was the speech made by Cyrus H. McCormick at their meeting. And the vote was unanimously with the McCormicks against revision.

The seminaries voted variously, but most of them in the negative. There was a rumbling echo of the struggle in 1896, loud enough so that Mrs. McCormick felt called upon to cable from abroad her hope that the directors would hold their ground. They held. The Assembly discharged the committee. And in 1897 the subject was peacefully closed.

The last important event of the nineties in McCormick Seminary history was one that hardly reached the surface. It was the consideration of increased endowment to be linked with the creation of a presidency. Until this time the Seminary had been conducted

without a president, members of the faculty serving in turn as chairman. Now the McCormicks stood ready to act. But the first candidate who was sounded declined; he, it was thought, would have brought peace between inharmonious factions. Without him, existing differences, both in the faculty itself and between certain members of the faculty and the McCormicks, constituted a stumbling block. Good counsellors advised postponement of the endowment, lest the power implicit in it be unwisely used, and this thought prevailed.

When the chair of Ecclesiastical History fell vacant shortly after the turn of the century, a man of progressive tendencies, Dr. James Riggs, of Auburn Theological Seminary, was proposed for it and warmly supported by the progressive group in faculty and directorate, with Cyrus H. McCormick's backing. Careful explanations of Dr. Riggs's position as a middle-of-the-road man won Mrs. McCormick to the side of the progressives. The leader of the conservative opposition, Dr. W. S. Plumer Bryan, shocked at indications that, contrary to tradition, a division of opinion in the faculty was to be disregarded, wrote to her in vigorous protest. Rather crisply she brushed the objection aside.

"The question is," she wrote, "not so much whether we will unite on Dr. Riggs—(it being almost certain that no one will object to a professor with so many necessary qualifications of high scholarship, sound theology, and congeniality of thought, and harmonious feeling with the existing faculty)—but the real question is—will he come? Will he leave Auburn?"

Dr. Riggs was indeed called and his acceptance was warmly urged not only by members of faculty and directorate but by the students. In that too Mrs. McCormick had a hand. Three who were her guests at luncheon one day spoke in eager hope that Dr. Riggs could come; whereupon Mrs. McCormick suggested that they express their hope to Dr. Riggs. They and other students promptly sent a message. But the conservative leader was unyielding. Strong tradition holds that he threatened heresy charges if the call were accepted. For various reasons, of which the division at McCormick was certainly one, the candidate did not come.

Gradually Mrs. McCormick and her sons became convinced that the remedy for this situation of conflict lay in the creation of

a presidency; that out of all the names considered the president should be Dr. James Gore King McClure.

Dr. McClure was well known to the McCormick family: in their summer sojourns at Lake Forest he was their pastor; he had been a wise director on the Seminary's Board for seven years, and was in other ways an outstanding Presbyterian leader. He was a moderate, tending to the progressive side, commanding the warm support of that wise and sound progressive, Dr. Zenos, who had indeed proposed his name.

In a brief history of the Seminary, Dr. McClure tells how the definitive presidential approach was made. On a beautiful summer morning in 1904 he was called to the Rush Street house. "In the interview Mrs. McCormick inquired whether in case the Directors of the Seminary should elect him to the Presidency he would take the office! It was a thrilling inquiry. He . . . had participated in the innumerable counsels of the institution when efforts to give the Seminary a partisan theological bias had been frustrated, knew the temper and antecedents of each member of the Faculty and of each member of the Board of Directors, and knew, too, the exact state of the finances of the Seminary. He was well aware that there were two types of thought existing in the Faculty, one of which was quite tenacious of the past and the other of which was ready for advances in statement of theological views."¹ But on one point he was clear: he could never undertake the great task unless the Seminary had adequate endowment; the certainty that, barring the unforeseen, the McCormicks would meet recurring deficits, would not give him ease. The unforeseen might come. All this he made explicit—and left.

Though the thought of endowment was not new, it had to be faced afresh. Much figuring brought the conclusion that an income of \$40,000 was essential (the annual deficit had been about \$33,000), and a million dollars was required to yield it. The outcome was an undertaking on the part of Mrs. McCormick to give \$750,000, while her sons Cyrus and Harold brought the amount to a million, and the three arranged in addition for the President's salary.

¹ James G. K. McClure, *The Story of the Life and Work of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago*. Chicago, printed at the Lakeside Press, 1929.

The decision was taken. But plans for the gift were kept a close secret, so the formal announcement was impressive. It was made at Commencement, a great day for the Seminary.

Dr. McClure's presidency, well begun, was to last until his retirement, in his early eighties—a period of twenty-three years. On entering the office he wrote to Mrs. McCormick: "It will be impossible for me to succeed in the work of the Presidency unless your counsel and sympathy are always with me. You must let me come to you as a son to a mother, asking your advice and profiting by your wisdom." And so it was with them throughout the years.

It was not roses all the way. The strain between the two points of view continued painfully. But Dr. McClure's talents as a "moderator" were brought to bear, and the definite association of Cyrus H. McCormick and his mother with the more progressive group carried impressive weight. Time brought changes; in the church at large conflict lost its sharpness. At length there was peace.

Milestones were marked by generous gifts. In 1909 "the eightieth year of the origin of the Seminary, the fiftieth year of its location in Chicago, and the one hundredth year of the birth of Cyrus H. McCormick" were celebrated in a two days' program. Eminent speakers, with Woodrow Wilson, then president of Princeton University, at the climax, made addresses bearing on these coincidental birthdays. Mrs. McCormick's special observance was a pledge to pay \$14,000 a year for each of the ten following years. But when 1915 came around, to mark the tenth year of Dr. McClure's presidency of the Seminary she added substantially to the endowment, and with her sons endowed the president's chair. It was a gift that lifted anxiety and ensured advance.

Mrs. McCormick's final contribution to the funds of the Seminary was made in her last full year—\$100,000, given without fixed designation but in part, it was understood, to meet the needs of the teaching staff.

The gift of a fellowship in Hebrew was made, early in the 1900's in a characteristic fashion—in a swift action following long consideration, and at night. It was made on the solicitation of a young faculty member, George Livingstone Robinson, professor of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis.

Within two years of his joining the faculty Dr. Robinson had distinguished himself by an archeological discovery in which Mrs.

McCormick, as well as the Seminary, took great pride. He had found and interpreted the Great High Place or sanctuary at the ancient rock city of Petra, capital of Edom—seen by others but without understanding of its significance. It was a story that Mrs. McCormick repeatedly asked the young professor to tell.

To find a High Place and to visit Petra, in the little-known region to the south and east of the Dead Sea, had been strong ambitions of Dr. Robinson and in 1900 he held them in mind as he followed on camel the Israelites' desert wanderings. But travel in these parts was hazardous and frowned upon by the Turks, and Dr. Robinson could find no guide. Finally he secured the guidance of a missionary who knew the country. At a certain point the Turkish authorities required them to accept military escort, and after three days' riding they reached their goal. They entered this all but lost old city through a deep, narrow gorge—the Sik, a wonderful mile and more of richly colored sandstone walls twisting through the brilliant-hued mountains that surround Petra. Emerging into a transverse gorge at the narrowest, darkest part of the Sik, they came on the incredible beauty of the Khazneh—probably the mausoleum of some great king—carved like a cameo in the rosy rock itself. Near this they camped.

Only three days were allowed them at Petra. On the first day they were climbing at random when Dr. Robinson observed two unusual pyramidal columns such as might indicate the proximity of a sanctuary. The top of the mountain still rose above them, capped by challenging ruins. Faint with exhaustion the missionary refused to climb farther, refused also to be left without the protection of their escort. But Dr. Robinson persevered, and as he stepped out alone on the smooth dome of the mountain top straight before him he saw a great rectangular court cut into the rock, two altars with stairway approaches, a large pool, and other cuttings—all of which told him that he had found a High Place—a place of worship and sacrifice of the vanished Nabateans, who followed the sons of Esau in this land.

This was the young man for whom one night in the following summer, at about half past nine, Mrs. McCormick sent her carriage to bring him to her house. After a long wait she appeared in the library accompanied by her son Stanley. "Now, Professor Robinson," she said, "you have been asking me for three years to do

something for your department. Tell me just what you want." Promptly the young professor outlined his hopes, which ran to a two-year fellowship in Hebrew, and on request he named \$25,000 as the necessary endowment. At once Stanley McCormick reminded his mother that money would not be earning as much in the future and that \$30,000 would be better. When Mrs. McCormick sought to bring him in with her on the giving, he politely withdrew to his room. But before the night visit was over, Mrs. McCormick had pledged the \$30,000 and her son had come down in dressing gown to offer \$15,000 for books to increase the slender resources of the Seminary shelves.

This night conference was by no means unusual. Other professors were summoned from their homes at hours commonly considered past all limits of a day. So was Mrs. McCormick's pastor, Dr. John Timothy Stone of Fourth Presbyterian Church, who was later to become president of the Seminary. Each came gladly of course.

But mothering this school of the prophets included something far more intimate—there was a more direct motherliness in Mrs. McCormick's kind ministrations to students and faculty, their wives or widows, their children. She sent faculty folk to the hospital when they were ill or to make sure of their health; sent doctors to them if that seemed a better course; sent them to other climates if that was indicated. She paid tuition fees for their children; made gifts of books; sent flowers; invited them to dinner—more often than not without advance warning and sometimes when all they could do was to rise from their own table and go, taking student guests along. She gave gifts, usually of silver or bonds, when faculty daughters married. When death entered a faculty home she was, if possible, present with aid and comfort.

One of the pleasantest illustrations of this more intimate side concerns a faculty daughter who had lost her mother. Shortly after, she became engaged to a Seminary senior. Mrs. McCormick gave a luncheon for her. When the meal was over, she drew the guest of honor aside, apparently intending to take her upstairs for a talk. They stepped into the automatic elevator and Mrs. McCormick closed the door; but instead of pushing the button, she drew the young woman down beside her on the car seat. In the place of her mother, she said, she felt that she must warn the bride-to-be of the pitfalls before her eager feet—as a wife, and particularly as a

minister's wife. Holding the young girl's hand, she gave her tender, wise advice that became a precious memory.

As for the students, above all she knew them. Naturally not all of them, though the professors were amazed at the number whose faces and names she recalled. But she sought out those who won her Old Testament fellowship, missionary candidates, any one recommended to her for his special qualities or his special need. There are memories of group breakfasts and lunches, of friendly greetings in Seminary parlors, of care in illness or distress.

One of the group breakfasts in particular is remembered, though with inevitable variations. It appears that eleven graduates of the Seminary class of 1902 were present on the day after Commencement—eleven who were to become foreign missionaries. One of the guests was the first winner of Mrs. McCormick's Hebrew fellowship; three others had been in the competition, but all four had withdrawn. To each of these men, during the breakfast, Mrs. McCormick passed her speaking tube, asking his reason for abandoning a chance at two years' study abroad. She was content with the answers, for they were in terms of missionary zeal and of romance: each of that special group felt that he must get right at his work, each wished to marry "the only girl" at once.

Each man in the group was asked about the country that he meant to serve and found his hostess well acquainted with the field. At the close of the breakfast she invited every man to send his diploma to her for framing. And shortly after, each of the four who were on the point of marrying received a helpful check.

Mrs. McCormick's warm feeling for the institution was shown in her attendance on Seminary occasions. She would often appear at opening day exercises, at Commencement, at the inauguration of new professors, and would stand beside Mrs. McClure at presidential receptions to greet directors and trustees and welcome students, or would delight the faculty by sharing in one of their dinners. From time to time she would go over to visit classes or listen to examinations. Sometimes the special reason was to acquaint some young man with the excellence of this beloved school. One of these youths was Henry Robinson Luce, member of a China missionary family that stood high in Mrs. McCormick's regard, who was to become widely known as editor and publisher. She had believed in Henry Luce's unusual ability when he was

still a school boy and had helped him on the early steps of his career by many kindnesses. Perhaps she had a propaganda purpose in exposing this promising youth to Seminary influences. They did not take.

Her joy in the Seminary was a joy in the product—the hundreds of young men whom the faculty was turning out into all fields of Christian work, multiplying her gifts a thousandfold as the years mounted. There were, of course, hundreds of Presbyterian pastors. There were educators in Christian colleges. There were home mission workers—in city slums, in far posts among Mexicans, Indians, Negroes, Mormons, others, and foreign missionaries in all the countries where Presbyterian work goes on. It was indeed a goodly company. As Mrs. McCormick reflected upon it and its radiating influence on many lives, she must have felt as Dr. John Timothy Stone felt at one Commencement: “I opened my eyes,” he wrote, “during the benediction and thought, as I saw him [Dr. McClure] standing there with uplifted hands, praying for those forty-four splendid fellows . . . that if your dear husband and you could have looked upon that scene, as undoubtedly he does, he would feel that no human or divine investment can be so great as the giving the chance to young men to preach the Gospel of Christ.”

PART IV
THE OLD ORDER PASSES

Chapter 16

THE OLD ORDER PASSES

IN THE summer of 1900 Mrs. McCormick visited a field at Mitry-Mory not far from Paris, where the McCormick horseless mower was to be tested. There was an air of festivity about the scene. Many invitations had been sent out by Mrs. McCormick, many others by her son Stanley. A special train was provided. All the French dealers in McCormick machines then in Paris were on hand. A tent had been set up to provide refreshments.

When Mrs. McCormick and Stanley and their party arrived after luncheon at a nearby farmhouse, they were surprised to see a Deering horseless mower already at work in a field opposite and the crowd swarming after it. Presently the Deering motor halted. The McCormick men started to chaff the Deering men with "Back him up in the shaft," and other such pleasantries. Stanley McCormick stopped them. The Deering machine started again but quit. Then the McCormick machine started and, in Mrs. McCormick's words, "it went along like a thing of life going around and around the piece of lucerne until it was entirely cut, without stopping, and made a fine impression on the assemblage."

While Mrs. McCormick and Stanley were watching, one of the French dealers came to them in excited, arm-waving protest. The Deering men were eating McCormick sandwiches and drinking McCormick wine in the McCormick tent! But Mrs. McCormick said it was all right and they should have all they wanted.

This was a part of the McCormick showing at the Universal Exposition at Paris. Mrs. McCormick had entered into the long preliminary plans with her sons, shared in the preparations; but in going along to Paris she had in mind, among other things, the social side of the exhibition. One did not "influence" judges of course, but one had a right to cultivate pleasant relations with

commissioners and other important men and with their wives, and to provide information about the history and achievements of the company. In the apartment leased for Mrs. McCormick, Cyrus, Harriet, and Stanley to occupy as fitted their varying summer schedules, there were lunches, teas, and dinners, at which such people were guests. On one occasion the Assistant United States Commissioner General to this exposition, Benjamin D. Woodward, was a guest and so was Eugène Tisserand, who as director of the Emperor's domains had known the McCormicks at the Exposition of 1867. Mrs. McCormick was happy to have Mr. Woodward, who they were told favored the Deerings, hear M. Tisserand, now an old man, tell the story of Mr. McCormick and the Emperor Napoleon III arm in arm watching the reaper work in the royal fields.

Many of the McCormick machines were shown in the Vincennes "annex" to the Exposition, others in the general Exposition located on the Champ de Mars in Paris. The McCormick Company, relying upon the prominent part they had played in other International Expositions in France, apparently thought adequate space would be automatically reserved for them by the Exposition authorities and did not make application soon enough to secure space for all their exhibits. So they built at Vincennes a McCormick Pavilion, a fine piece of architecture, with appropriate decorative designs, which was officially opened by the United States Commissioner, with Stanley McCormick, white-faced but effective, making the speech of welcome. It held models of the McCormick harvesting machines from the reaper of 1831 to the 1900 version of mower with reaper attachment; various exhibits of special machines and processes, and panoramas and other pictures designed to show the proud place of the McCormick Company. Certain machines were silver plated—the same that had been shown at the World's Columbian Exposition seven years before. The McCormick machines got a satisfying share of the prizes, though the Deering and the McCormick harvesting machines each won a grand prize.

Never was the rivalry among harvester companies, especially between the McCormicks and the Deerings, more savage than in these years at the turn of the century. It was sharply marked at the Exposition. Not only had the Deerings received the best space but

they had won the right to present a "retrospective exhibit of the development of the reaper." This exhibit the McCormicks considered unfair. There was much controversy over the labels attached to various machines, and in the end the McCormicks prepared a retrospective exhibit of their own. The strain continued and heightened. A McCormick spokesman in 1911 wrote: "For a decade before 1902 the harvesting machine business was thoroughly demoralized. Trade rivalry had become a bitter, wasteful, ruinous warfare of a sort never known in any other business. . . . Competition . . . was a 'guerrilla war,' seeking and causing the ruthless ruin of competitors. It produced unfair discriminations between customers and wasteful losses to dealers and manufacturers."

Out of this tension the idea of consolidation, which had taken a fresh start just before the Exposition, began to press again. From this beginning arose negotiations that were carried on intermittently and from different approaches, until they climaxed in the formation of the International Harvester Company in the summer of 1902. In all of these Mrs. McCormick, head of the family and chief stockholder, shared in many consultations with her sons, her daughter Mrs. Blaine, her brother, attorneys, and the principal McCormick Harvesting Machine Company officials.

A McCormick practice was to analyze a subject into a list of questions arranged for voting and then secure the vote of each member of the family and perhaps some of the company officials on each point. The leading question of course was, Is it better for us to go on alone or to enter into a consolidation? Late in 1901, though she had already entered into discussion of plans for combination with the Deerings, Mrs. McCormick was saying: "As we are going on well now as we are, the proposition or price must be very tempting to make me willing now. I do not prefer a combined organization at this time, per se, for its own sake." Her three sons each voted for "a combined organization."

Until the summer of 1902 the negotiations were personally conducted by the McCormicks and the Deerings. Plan after plan was considered in 1901 and early 1902. The Deerings made one proposal for a combination of harvesting machine businesses that involved equal interests between the two companies. The McCormicks declined. They felt entitled to "preponderating" influence.

Later the Deerings suggested a corporation based on the McCormicks' desire for majority and the proposition was argued for weeks. In March, 1901 Mr. Cyrus H. McCormick met Mr. William Deering in St. Augustine, and the conference promised well. In the summer the men of both houses conferred repeatedly in the Palmer House, obstacles were encountered, and suddenly the Deerings closed the subject. At one time the McCormicks asked the Deerings if they would care to sell out on a cash basis. The Deerings thought the McCormicks would not accept any figure they would name and named none. The McCormicks in turn advanced a "third company plan," wherein each of the two big companies should retain control of its own business but with a large minority interest in the other, and a third company, controlled by both, should be formed through consolidation of three minor harvesting machine companies.

Along with thoughts of consolidation were considerations of ways to secure capital for the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company—perhaps to accomplish a merger, perhaps to enlarge the company if they should decide to go on alone. The Exposition of 1900 had given the McCormicks a greatly heightened enthusiasm for the development of their foreign trade. They had met machine people from all over the world and had seen opportunity in world-wide perspective. Expansion was on their minds and hence plans to secure capital. Mr. Cyrus H. McCormick sought the advice of various lawyers and bankers and other financial men. One who came in close touch was Francis Lynde Stetson, eminent lawyer who had been J. P. Morgan's attorney in the formation of the United States Steel Corporation. Mr. Stetson consulted with the McCormicks, including Mrs. McCormick, at the Rush Street house in many-hour sessions and advised about bankers, negotiators, and all the questions of whether and how. If a merger were to be made, Mr. Stetson thought Mr. McCormick should do the actual negotiating himself, and he appears to have sympathized with the McCormick wish not "to go to Wall Street" for capital because of the vast expense. But on one of the visits Mr. McCormick paid to his office, he suggested that Mr. McCormick should call on Mr. Morgan. After all, Mr. Morgan's father, Junius S. Morgan, and Cyrus Hall McCormick the inventor had been

friends. Mr. McCormick went "for a moment, but not on business."

Meantime by 1901 Mr. John D. Rockefeller, who had not cared to go along when the Deering option was in hand in 1897, was interested to hear about the McCormicks' business, merger plans and all, and offered, when the right moment should come, to participate. Though available papers do not reveal all the steps of this relation, they do show that the McCormicks liked the idea so well that they were prepared to accept less than a controlling share in a merger if Mr. Rockefeller should take a large enough share so that when he voted with them they would control. And Mrs. McCormick was wholly delighted with the prospect of a Rockefeller connection.

Thus matters stood when in June of 1902 Mr. McCormick went to New York in the financial interest of the company. Capital was needed and the company had borrowed to its limit in the ordinary way of borrowing. Whether the company was to push ahead with the expansion of its foreign trade and build up raw material resources to offset the Deerings' recent energetic development along this line, or to enter into combination with other harvesting machine companies, money was needed. So Mr. McCormick went to New York. No contemporary paper gives his exact purpose and plan in going and in having his brothers join him. Nor can this narrative claim to retell all their movements. But a remarkably interesting group of reports sent back to Mrs. McCormick for study, shows a clear evolution of their ideas and plans as to consolidation.

In different combinations the McCormick men again interviewed several lawyers and financiers, seeking their judgment on the possibility of an amalgamation, and in particular on the "third company" plan which was then the current plan before McCormicks and Deerings. This plan was dismissed as almost certain to be pronounced illegal, and the McCormicks came to a point where they definitely decided that they and the Deerings should no longer deal personally with each other.

The first thought was to employ personal negotiators, and they had tentatively decided that Francis Lynde Stetson and their own attorney, Cyrus Bentley, should represent the McCormicks. But another suggestion determined their course. Mr. John D. Rocke-

feller, Jr. offered to get from George W. Perkins, Morgan's junior partner whom he knew well, an opinion on Mr. Stetson's suitability for the purpose. The outcome was that Mr. Perkins, praising Mr. Stetson as a lawyer rather than as a negotiator, intimated that he himself might be interested.

Straight from Mr. Rockefeller's office Cyrus and Stanley McCormick went to see Mr. Perkins, a short talk was followed by a long one, and, in Mr. Cyrus H. McCormick's words, "In the search for proper representative mediators, we came upon the idea of acting through Morgan & Co. on a moderate basis of proper charge." For more than a week there was a succession of meetings with Mr. Perkins and of consultations with William Nelson Cromwell, whom the McCormicks had employed as their New York legal consultant. It was the record of these intensive conferences, filled with technicalities of organizing and financing, that the McCormick men, united in favor of proceeding, sent home to their mother and their sister Mrs. Blaine to read and weigh before they returned. The plan was not yet complete, but there was enough to show the difference between this and all previous plans for getting together; for the McCormicks were agreeing to sell their company to Morgan and Company, and Mr. Perkins, for the house of Morgan, was to have almost complete control of organizing a proposed new company.

On June 23 the family—lacking Stanley, who was held in New York by illness—gathered at 135 Rush Street for a decisive conference on the important question: should they sell their own family-controlled business to become, if Mr. Perkins's trading operations should succeed, part of a great combination? Cyrus and Harold McCormick told their mother and sister the whole story, and Cyrus McCormick's diary reports: "They agreed with our plans and will vote with us." It was not yet a vote to combine, but a vote to proceed in that direction along the lines proposed.

Then the brothers dug into the additional facts and figures that Mr. Perkins had asked them, if the vote proved favorable, to bring to New York.

No other company was approached until the McCormicks had made their decision; but in the following weeks five companies were involved: The McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, the Deering Harvester Company, Warder, Bushnell & Glessner

Company, the Plano Company, and the Milwaukee Harvester Company. And the Milwaukee firm was being purchased through the instrumentality of the McCormicks, by the house of Morgan itself, to sell to the projected new company.

In July representatives of the competing firms, invited by Mr. Perkins, came to New York for conferences—not joint conferences, but dealings with Mr. Perkins. And in July Mrs. McCormick joined her sons. Her daughter, Mrs. Blaine, though in close and constant touch, did not actually share the mid-summer sessions.

It was New York at its worst, that hot July of 1902. In their mid-town hotel the four McCormicks with their attorneys and aids, and part of the time Eldridge Fowler, worked at high tension. Mr. Perkins, now fully launched on the project, moved among the various groups of harvesting machine men with the object of buying the properties of each company and creating a new organization. On some days the McCormicks had three interviews with Mr. Perkins, the first at half past eight in the morning. Usually these talks were held in the hotel, sometimes in offices. In between, the McCormick brothers and their attorneys conferred on points just raised or points to be raised; and Mrs. McCormick had a place in the consultations. Twice Harold McCormick took train to consult with Mr. Rockefeller not only about his contemplated investment in the new company, but for the benefit of his advice in general. All the other hours were filled with work over figures and plans.

There were many hurdles to take, even after all the companies had agreed in principle to proceed. There were even moments when the whole thing threatened to collapse. The McCormicks, unfamiliar with such procedures, had not at first fully grasped the implications of the Morgan control—hadn't realized that even the slate of officers was to be settled without their advance knowledge. There was much to be determined about the amount of capital and the share each would have. John D. Rockefeller's participation in the business was a theme for repeated discussion. Methods of appraisal were an important subject.

It was day and night work—"Oh! the toil, in these rooms, of these two weeks!" Mrs. McCormick wrote. "Oh! the night work of our dear boys!" One night, she said, they worked all night. But by July 28 the consolidation was practically complete. Con-

tracts for the sale of the five companies were signed. "For weal or woe the die is cast," Mrs. McCormick wrote to Harriet, "and a tremendous responsibility it was—"Perhaps *never* in the history of industry or trade or finance has such a mountain of responsibility rested upon individual members of one family."

Acceptance was not easy for her, and as the negotiations were approaching conclusion she held up decision for perhaps four days, while she weighed all the details. The pull of her mind was toward what had been founded by her husband, cherished by her and her children. Sentiment ran strong and deep for going on as they were, so that the business might be on its own—"feeling too the heavy weight of responsibility upon me, as the only one left of the older generation." She feared lest the thing that had been theirs should no longer be theirs. But though all this weight of sentiment, caution, loyalty, and natural reluctance to change, retarded her, she did not hold back when the case was clear. The weight of evidence in the situation—the common sense that called for combination—won her and she went along, carefully, guardedly, but as usual with complete devotion of ability and interest. Her close sharing in those days of strain in the old Manhattan Hotel was by no means the least of her contributions to the family business.

When the end was in sight she went away to the mountains with Stanley, who had almost broken under the complex strains. But even in her Adirondack camp her mind busily followed the final arrangements. On August 12 the International Harvester Company was launched.

Mr. Rockefeller was in the picture now with a large block of stock (enough to give the McCormicks and "impartial capital" a majority) and large loans to follow. The house cleaning that in 1897 he had thought necessary had taken place, largely through the activities of that energetic new broom, Harold McCormick, his son-in-law, and he believed in the business.

All stock certificates were deposited with the house of Morgan, and for ten years the affairs of the new company were to be conducted by a Voting Trust, consisting of George Perkins, Charles Deering, and Cyrus H. McCormick—an arrangement that insured continuity of management in formative years and made control on the part of either leading company impossible. It was a severe limitation on power to act, from which the McCormicks were

glad to be released when the time came. The company was capitalized for 120 million dollars, which included no water whatever. Its president was Cyrus H. McCormick. Harold F. McCormick was one of three vice presidents and a member of the Executive Committee, and all three McCormick brothers and Eldridge Fowler were directors—all chosen, under the terms of the arrangement, by Mr. Perkins.

When Cyrus McCormick telegraphed his mother the list of officers, she wired back proud congratulations and wrote: "I deem it an honor,—and it is one you both merit. You have, side by side, worked for this great Institution, and there are few Institutions in any country so *great*—so honorable!"

There was to be along with relief a continuance of strain. An immediate concern—part, indeed, of the organization of the company—was appraisals. This work was to be done by experts, but Mrs. McCormick was anxious lest the company so precious to her should not secure complete justice. She exhorted the McCormick people as the procedure began to be watchful. It took so long that eventually the companies authorized Mr. Perkins to make the final determinations. Mrs. McCormick was not at all surprised when the outcome of the appraisals showed a clear superiority for the McCormicks and an over-all figure embarrassingly larger than Mr. Perkins's estimate in fixing the capitalization.

One undertaking of the McCormick family, which practically constituted the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company, must have given them deep pleasure. Shortly after the new organization was formed, they decided to give their old employees a bonus. Probably the idea originated with Stanley McCormick. Both Mr. Cyrus H. McCormick and his mother have been credited with the generous thought—an indication that it was in harmony with the attitude of the family as a whole. Certainly all fell in with the idea. The actual distribution was delayed far beyond the time they chose, the autumn of 1902; but it was apparently completed in the early part of 1904.

In general the plan was based on length of service and current salary, but there were conditioning factors. Fifteen thousand shares of the old company stock were deposited by the members of the family on a carefully worked out plan, and certificates were issued for exchange with International Harvester Company stock.

These were sent to former employees of certain classes, to active employees, to many others thought to be suitably in line for the gift. The distribution brought heartwarming responses.

The organization of the company was by no means complete when it was incorporated in August, and as early as October of that same year Mr. McCormick was telling Mr. Perkins of his dissatisfactions. He felt that an equality between the Deerings and the McCormicks was being set up that was not justified by the facts, including the facts already disclosed in the McCormicks' favor by the appraisals. There were to be many complaints from both sides before the company was finally smoothed into shape.

"It is weaving life with three threads," Mrs. McCormick once wrote. At the moment she was thinking of three temporary problems; but at any time in her mature life the expression might have applied to business, family affairs, philanthropies.

Though business pushed for attention in these early 1900's, grievous family matters also absorbed heart and mind. Three times in about the first half of the decade the death of a beloved grandchild drew greatly on Mrs. McCormick for herself and for her stricken children. The first was John Rockefeller McCormick, firstborn of Harold and Edith, the second their infant daughter Editha. "Jack," a boy of four, was a child of remarkable personality and promise. When very early in 1901 he died of scarlet fever at his grandfather Rockefeller's home in Tarrytown, New York (while his little brother Harold Fowler lay ill of the same dread disease), the whole family mourned him deeply with a sense of the loss not only to themselves but to the little boy's generation. His grandmother McCormick expressed what they all felt: "His mind was so poised that he was every way charming to converse with. For two hours he would do the things we were doing, whether looking at pictures or reading the story, without once running away. How I loved that golden hair; that spirited little figure, springing over his toy wagons with a leap and bound,—that obedient little spirit—which, even if crying, would *cry so softly!* as if disciplined to hold himself in. . . . His home and all the places where he has been are filled with his strong personality. Young as he was, he always left an impression of great strength of character."

Four years later Elizabeth, only daughter of Cyrus and Harriet

McCormick, died with shocking suddenness after an operation. A girl of twelve, Elizabeth was already taller than her grandmother and mature beyond her years. She was greatly gifted and had written both music and poems. Grandmother and granddaughter had been very close, held thus partly no doubt by the marked resemblance of the child to her grandmother in appearance, mind, nature. The two used to visit together, sitting hand in hand. "A precious understanding between us;—and oh, I have no friend now, like that!"

Meantime, a few months before Elizabeth's death, Mrs. McCormick had been obliged to face a happy event that was nevertheless an ordeal. Her remaining child, who had lived alone with her in the family home for several years, married. In the fall of 1903 Stanley met and fell in love with Katharine Dexter. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wirt Dexter of Chicago. Mr. Dexter had been a prominent and wealthy lawyer there with a home on Prairie Avenue, and the Dexter and McCormick families were acquainted. He died when Katharine was a young girl, and some years later Mrs. Dexter and her daughter moved to Boston. At the time when Stanley McCormick's interest began she was in her final year at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

That summer Stanley told his mother of their engagement. Then the Dexters went abroad. Stanley speedily followed and presently from Europe came the announcement of engagement and of wedding date. The time before the wedding was so brief that the family was thrown into great activity of planning attendance. Because of his wife's health Harold McCormick could not go, much to the regret of both "little boys"; nor could Mrs. Blaine and her young son. But Mrs. McCormick, Cyrus and Harriet and their son Cyrus, Eldridge Fowler and his wife, Margaret Brewer Fowler, whom he had married the autumn before, and Mr. Fowler's fifteen-year-old daughter Kate all journeyed to Geneva, where the wedding took place. Mrs. McCormick went long enough in advance to stay with Stanley in Paris while he shopped for a perfect strand of matched pearls for his bride, and then to spend a week at Aix-les-Bains visiting with Katharine Dexter and her mother.

There were two wedding ceremonies: a civil one in the sixteenth century Hôtel de Ville and a religious one, performed by a clergy-

man from home in the lovely Chapel of the Maccabees near the Cathedral. A group of relatives and friends were the fortunate spectators, some perhaps sharing in the picturesque walk from one fine old building to the other. And Mrs. McCormick could not have been the only one to thrill at the beauty of the tall young couple as they moved through the beautiful day. She herself supplied no small part of the charm of the picture, exquisite as she was in gray brocaded satin and lace and dainty shirred bonnet with an elegant aigrette.

There was a luncheon at the hotel where the Dexters stayed, and then the bridal couple were gone to an ideal honeymoon place: a pleasant hotel perched several thousand feet above Lake Geneva at Caux, where they could feel sequestered from the world, at the same time looking out on the world in a magnificent view of Lake Geneva and the Alps beyond.

Mrs. McCormick, lingering to take a cure at Bad Nauheim, was drawn home by distressing news of her brother. Eldridge Fowler's health had been unsound for some time and he had been taking the waters at Carlsbad and Bad Nauheim in hope of improvement; but in spite of his better judgment he had gone to his nephew's wedding instead of sailing for home. The family had started west shortly after, but sultry weather had made the voyage trying for him and he had declined rapidly. A cablegram told his sister that he was seriously ill in a New York hotel. Hastening home, she had only two days with him and spent these in helping to get him off for California and arranging the utmost in medical care. She stayed on for a time to offer aid and comfort to her dearly loved niece, Clara Fowler Fleming (daughter of Eldridge and Mary Fowler), also desperately ill in the same hotel. It was the final chapter in Clara's long illness like that of her own mother, extending over years of persistent search for a healing climate and way of living. She, too, with her husband and little daughter, had been in Europe during summer and fall, but she was far too ill to go to her cousin's wedding.

Before this month of November was over father and daughter had both died after returning to California. Mrs. McCormick, grieving deeply for both, had the comfort of a close, enduring friendship with her brother's widow and the devotion of her lovely young niece Kate and Clara's engaging little girl Marjorie.

Her brother had gone along with her and her sons in the formation of the International Harvester Company. Now, in the troubled years of hammering the new company into shape, his counsel was to be lacking and missed.

It was a slow, painful process—fusing five independent companies accustomed to exist in the sharpest rivalry—especially the two giants, McCormick and Deering. “The trouble was,” Harold McCormick said, “we came together as enemies—and not as friends,” though this did not affect their social relations. A year was needed to set up a working organization, and it was some time before the fierce fighters in the selling field really knew they were no longer rivals. As for the heads, the company was organized on a basis of balance in positions and powers; and many an incident caused unhappy emotion on one side or the other. Mr. Perkins was repeatedly called in to listen and asked for aid in determining a course of action, though more than once the McCormicks felt that Mr. Perkins himself was swayed toward the Deerings or in his own interest.

The year 1906 was critical. Profits were down and the Deerings were greatly dissatisfied with “McCormick management.” Opinions differed as to what they wanted—to run the business themselves or to get their money out—possibly because they differed among themselves—father, two sons, a son-in-law. At any rate, intensive conferences took place in New York this summer as in 1902 with Mr. Perkins going back and forth between the McCormicks and the Deerings.

Several different plans of reorganization were proposed and discussed to exhaustion. Different set-ups of officers were considered, “neutral management” even, with an employee president and no millionaire in office at all. There were rumors of dire possibilities—such as destruction of property—and there was much bitterness. As Cyrus Bentley, general counsel for the International Harvester Company, wisely said: “The question of the organization was really a very minor question; . . . the real difficulty about profits had been that the Company was creating a new business and . . . the creating of a new business was slow work . . . the unsatisfactory state of profits was due ten times as much to the necessity of creating new business as to any details of the organization or the officering of the Company.”

Late in the year a solution was found: early in 1907 the capital stock, without being increased, was divided equally between preferred and common, seven per cent dividends being paid on the preferred, none on the common (in 1903 three per cent and in the three following years four per cent had been paid on the whole stock). This solution satisfied the Deerings in that they could now have a stock they could sell—and could give away too, creditably, in donations to favored causes.

But the tensions of the year 1906 had been high, the strain severe. And on no one more severe than on Stanley McCormick, climaxing a strain of several hard years. In 1901 he had been overworking in his relation to the business since he became acting superintendent of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company Works and for many months had arrived at the factory on the stroke of seven o'clock. Whether this early arrival and the long hours were necessary was a point of discussion even then; but at any rate Stanley was being thus nervously worn. Then came the intense work of that hot summer of 1902, when the McCormick brothers, inexperienced in such negotiations, all felt heavily burdened. "One of Stanley's qualities . . .," his mother wrote, "is his inborn trait of thoroughness. He sifts a subject to the bottom, and such examinations are exhausting to him."

His marriage and a long honeymoon brought an interlude in business concentrations and an opportunity to put first the living of a healthful easy life, prescribed by physicians. This Katharine and Stanley did—skating, skiing, snowshoeing, staying long hours out of doors in the bracing cold of a Swiss mountain winter, then traveling in leisurely fashion by car in Italy.

But the problems of helping to "create a new business" were waiting for him on his return. And in the summer of 1906 his physicians forbade nearly all work in the business. At first Katharine and Stanley had lived in Chicago, part of the time at 135 Rush Street in rooms altered for their needs; but now their home was in Brookline, Massachusetts in a house arranged to give Stanley the maximum of outdoor rest. He shared in business counsels principally when his brothers came to Boston to talk with him.

How much this strain of application to difficult problems contributed to his tragic breakdown that fall is a question. Back of the business strain in terms of overwork was that of being in business

at all instead of in art. There were perhaps strains in personal relationships.

At any rate that November his nervous system gave way and he, like his elder sister, lived thereafter in shadow.

The agony of this illness to his mother, still—and always—engrossed by her daughter's care, may be imagined. Though the initiative for details of his care and treatment could not rest with her, she entered into every phase with devotion of time, thought, love. Eventually, when there was no promise of recovery, conservators were appointed on the motion of Katharine McCormick with the approval of Stanley's own family. But though she heard from him a little and of him much, Mrs. McCormick was not to see her adored youngest child again except at a distance.

Her life was changed now, not in essential interests but in emphasis. Two ill children drew on her heart, her thought, her time. Relatives, on both her husband's side and in her own lines, to whom she had given money, thought, and attention throughout the years, still looked to her. Some of her gifts were for support or care of illness, but a large number provided education for young kinfolk in domestic science, music, general courses. Often she required these recipients of her aid to keep careful accounts of their expenditures, which she or her secretary checked. And they were made to know she was watching by an occasional comment or question. Others besides relatives were on her continuing list of protégés, especially young people whom she sent to school.

Her gifts and attention to chosen causes claimed more and more time. But, though the need of her in the business gradually lessened, the affairs of the new company were constantly before her, as her files testify, filled as they are with copies of the letters of her sons Cyrus and Harold and of other International Harvester Company officials as various problems pressed or new lines of activity opened.

It was a relief to all concerned when the ten years of the Voting Trust were over. Cyrus McCormick wrote about it feelingly and his mother, replying, said: "The import of the date is fully appreciated—marking the passing of a régime most trying for ten long years. I rejoice that you, and we all, have lived to see its termination."

There had been problems, anxiety, troubles, but there had also

been many satisfactions. The company was firmly established, and though Mrs. McCormick could say wistfully, "when we were McCormick Company (those dear days)," and probably never ceased to regret the loss of the founder's name, she was proud of the International Harvester Company.

The manufacture of harvesting machines had been supplemented by the manufacture of other lines of agricultural machinery, so that employment in either producing or selling was no longer seasonal and intermittent. Jobs were all-year jobs. The expansion of foreign trade had been one of the chief objects of the company and it had succeeded. Manufacturing plants and new distributing agencies had been set up in many foreign countries. The business had become world-wide, international. In welfare measures and working conditions much progress had been made, and in all this Mrs. McCormick had shared with sympathetic interest and helpful counsel. A system of profit sharing had been developed, under which more than 3600 of the employees had become stockholders. A pension system, one of the earliest in the country, had been established. A plan for compensation in case of injury or death had been put into effect early—in fact, President Cyrus H. McCormick claimed, "it anticipated the earliest workmen's compensation law in the United States by nearly two years." And though Mrs. McCormick's papers do not show her activity in connection with these various movements, her grandson Fowler McCormick, for some years president of the company, does not hesitate, out of his associations with grandmother, uncle, and father, to ascribe much credit for advanced positions to Nettie Fowler McCormick.

Mrs. McCormick took active part in an International Harvester Company matter in 1913, when she was seventy-eight. At the Company's twine mill in Auburn, New York there was a walkout, based on no complaint of its workers, in sympathy with strikers at the Columbia Cordage Company of Auburn. Almost four weeks had been lost from the work of filling important contracts for the foreign twine market, with the harvest season nearing. Transfer of the twine mill machinery to a point on the seaboard was already under discussion and this trouble threatened to precipitate action. One morning in mid-April Mrs. McCormick was startled to read in the *Tribune* that part of the machinery was forthwith to be

moved. Both Cyrus and Harold were out of the country. So she went at once to the International Harvester office and in the corridor encountering Judge Post, general attorney of the Company, learned that the report was true. Judge Post held that the Auburn plant was too far from the seaboard to be economical. Mrs. McCormick replied: "If it is best to move it, as a business measure, let it be done; but not now in the limelight of publicity, and passion, inviting further outrage from unreasoning employees." The point of this was that the Company was then under fire in a suit against it under the Sherman law.

Mrs. McCormick took her arguments with her into the office of Mr. Legge, general manager, who had just returned after four days' effort to settle the differences. Mr. Legge was "firmly set to move the machinery." He had a telegram ready to send to the New York State Commissioner of Labor to the effect that "the Company had reached the limit of effort." Seeing it, Mrs. McCormick said, "Mr. Legge, this closes the door." She reviewed for him the experience which dictated her caution—"the awful episode in 1886 . . . all arising from the unwisdom of Averill"—and urged that "moving the machinery now would be rendered spectacular by the nature of the case." There had been a plea for delay from Governor Sulzer of New York, whose proffered services, she said, should not be rejected. She argued that the anger of the 650 employees, mostly women, when they saw the machinery—their only means of livelihood—actually loaded and moved out, would lead to a collision with the troops, ending in bloodshed.

Others in the office were drawn into the discussion, Mrs. McCormick valiantly holding her ground. When she saw that two of the group were leaning toward the delay for which she argued, she said that in so grave a crisis they should have the advice of John P. Wilson, general counsel of the company. He was immediately summoned, he came, and his counsel was for delay. "Thus the night closed on us."

The next day an order was sent to "suspend things for a few days," in deference to Governor Sulzer's request. And the citizens of Auburn took a hand, acting to end the strike. Mrs. McCormick wrote to her son Harold that between Mr. Wilson "and your Mother and the Governor we have stopped proceedings. Thankful I am!"

PART V

THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND

“He who does the work is not so productively employed as he who multiplies the doers.”

—Thomas Chalmers, quoted in
the *Life of Samuel Morley*, by
Edwin Hodder

Chapter 17

LIGHT CENTERS IN THE MOUNTAINS

WHEN Mrs. McCormick decided to build McCormick Hall at Greeneville and Tusculum College, she did not realize that she was lighting the first of a series of torches to illuminate dark places in the Southern mountains. But her interest in this country and its people grew and became one of her greatest channels of benevolence, one to which we devote a separate chapter.

The movement of her personal and business life is readily followed chronologically. Part of the detail of that personal life was her concern with several outstanding causes—interviews, letters, decisions, gifts—which over long years entered into the pattern of her days. But to see her relation to these causes clearly, we must abandon tracing them through the complexities of her other interests and look at each, as it concerned her, as a whole. This method has already been followed with McCormick Theological Seminary and is here applied to schools for the Southern mountain people, with foreign missions and international student work to come in similar treatment.

The mountain country had appealed to her imagination from her early knowledge of it. In the fall after that first pledge was made to Tusculum her son Cyrus visited Eastern Tennessee and wrote a description of it to his mother. "We have fallen in love with that almost unknown land," she wrote back to him. "It is, strange to say, just what I pictured it from long treasured fancies about this country so much talked of *during the war*." (This was long before radio and movies had brought the mountain people close.)

She had herself spent some time in the Highland country, establishing her daughter Virginia in a house at Maryville, Tennessee

near the Chilhowee range. Later when this daughter's winter residence had been set up first at Asheville, then at Huntsville, Alabama, Mrs. McCormick saw the mountain country in the course of her Southern visits. Always she brought back enthusiasm over something magical in the light and air, the color in the foliage and the hills—something that enhanced her interest in the people and in the schools she fostered.

Her gifts to Tennessee colleges, five of them, were made long after their pioneer stage. But her next step, right into the mountains in Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina, placed her almost among the founders.

Education through all this vast difficult region was still in an early stage. Public schools were few, offering at best only from three to five months in the year and almost inaccessible to people living in roadless isolation deep in the mountains. For a long time, after a pioneer period, the church outside the mountains had neglected them. Gradually, denominations and sects that did not care for an educated ministry came into the mountains and fixed a type of religious experience that is still characteristic: the insistence on sudden conversion, the sharp vividness of heaven and hell, the stern limitation on pleasure. Primitive Baptists, Old Regulars, Free Methodists, Holiness groups predominated. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century several of the major denominations returned to the forgotten people with evangelistic and educational agencies.

Mrs. McCormick's first undertaking in mountain schools lower than college rank was in a Southern Presbyterian field—Jackson Collegiate Institute at Jackson, Kentucky, county seat of Breathitt County, long known for murderous feuds. Situated on the Kentucky River and newly reached by the railroad, Jackson was clearly a strategic point.

One of Mrs. McCormick's teachers, Mr. F. F. M. Richardson, has vividly pictured the place:

"Dragged through the winter mud of the two streets in a glass-windowed hack, powered by two big horses, the visitor arriving on the noon train saw Jackson. Those arriving on the night train only felt it.

"An eight-ox team was not uncommon in the streets of Jackson. Such teams had generally come from 'up Lonesome' or some other

creek leading back into the interior. . . . Sometimes they brought boys and girls for a winter in school although more often these walked, or sometimes came on the hack that carried the infrequent mail.

"All nights in Jackson except moonlight nights were 'black outs.' . . . A coal oil lantern became an evening accessory. . . . At a night church service the lanterns were turned low and parked under the seats. Sometimes the put-put-put of a struggling flickering flame became a highly speculative matter all to the exclusion of the minister's forensic effort. Sometimes a sleeping dog, stepped on by a late comer into the pew, upset a lantern or two in a hasty exit."

But Mrs. McCormick's information about the school came from Dr. L. H. Blanton, a Southern minister and a former Confederate soldier, who was Chancellor of Central University at Richmond, Kentucky and thus itinerant supervisor of several secondary schools, including the one at Jackson.

The seed of information thus sown sprouted only a little for several years. But in 1897 Mrs. McCormick and Jackson Institute's special benefactor, Mrs. S. P. Lees of New York, each gave five thousand dollars to a fund for enlarging the main building. The name of the school changed then to the S. P. Lees Collegiate Institute, offering work from primary through high school.

In the school year 1899-1900 Mrs. McCormick contributed expensive outfits for domestic science and manual training (rather new ideas then in which she strongly believed) and assumed the salary of a teacher for each department; she made possible the erection of McCormick Chapel, a combination day and Sunday school "across the river" for the children of desperately poor miners' families and supplied a teacher. She gave to the manual training department an electric light plant, the first electric light in Jackson, and her son Stanley contributed a mechanical drawing outfit.

All of this involved much time and thought and the exercise of careful judgment by Mrs. McCormick. Often by her own hand she wrote to teachers, encouraging them to share their problems with her, trying to impart her eager hopes for their work which to her was purest missionary endeavor.

The value of practical training for mountain girls must have been clear to Mrs. McCormick from her knowledge of the Home

Industrial School at Asheville, North Carolina, which she visited. She knew Florence Stephenson, its first principal, under whose wise leadership for thirty years the school carried new ways of doing and thinking into the mountain cabins. She knew Frances L. Goodrich, who had left her New Hampshire home with the thought that the program of neighborliness of Rivington Street Settlement on New York's lower East Side might be tried in the mountains. When Florence Stephenson agreed, Miss Goodrich, quiet, unpretentious, highly educated and cultured, came and simply began being a neighbor to the mountain people near Asheville. Her way was to build a little house at some strategic point in the mountains, where two women teachers would live and begin teaching; they would organize a Sunday school and mothers' meetings; and let the house shine as an example of taste, cleanliness, good cooking, home atmosphere. In rocky Laurel country, she began at Allan's Old Stand, later called Allanstand—the well-known name, now, of the Asheville headquarters for the mountain crafts that Miss Goodrich preserved and developed.

Mrs. McCormick made no large gifts to the Asheville and Laurel country work; but she showed faith and interest in several ways. Once when Frances Goodrich was in the North Mrs. McCormick invited a company to the Rush Street house to hear her tell of the Laurel work—a friendly, hospitable practice of hers for many causes. More than once too she sent her workers to see the Asheville schools and Laurel country settlements.

Indirectly, information that set in contrast this work and that at Jackson had a part in bringing about the withdrawal of Mrs. McCormick's aid from the S. P. Lees Collegiate Institute. But disappointed as she was in certain features, she could not have been in the results of her work there if she saw them as did one teacher: ". . . boys and girls in those five years transformed from crude untrained youth into the finest type of youth. . . . Of all the money Mrs. McCormick may have spent on many different interests none could ever have been so highly productive as the money she invested at Jackson." The school, Lees Junior College now, carries on.

It was Tusculum boys who directed Mrs. McCormick's interest toward the mountains. It was her own visit to Tusculum in the summer of 1898 that turned a new page in the story. That summer

Mrs. McCormick and Stanley (just back from New Mexico where he had bought a ranch to live on) had gone together for a brief visit to Virginia McCormick at Asheville. On their way back they paid a surprise visit to Tusculum—stirring the summer campus to its outer fringes.

The story, told with gusto at Tusculum decades later, is that their train was approaching Greeneville when, suddenly realizing that this was the station for Tusculum, they determined to stop over. Hurriedly gathering their luggage, they got off. They spent the night at the hotel, meaning to drive unannounced the four miles to Tusculum, but the hotel proprietor saw fit to speak out. Whereupon word flashed from faculty home to home, from hall to dormitory—Mrs. McCormick was coming! In the absence of President Jere Moore, it fell to Dr. T. S. Rankin, professor and treasurer, to receive the guests. When they arrived via stage and carriage, the two were welcomed by a thrilled reception committee.

A tour of the campus took the visitors to McCormick Hall; to Craig Hall, erected with a large McCormick contribution as a dormitory for boys; to the Old College building of 1841 that was the only substantial building when the McCormicks first took an interest. All three were of brick, well built, well placed. On the side toward Greeneville stood a log cabin, the second to be built on the campus, while across the road was the red brick farmhouse of the Doak family.

All these Mrs. McCormick saw, marveling meantime at the Appalachians ranged in summer beauty of green forest as a campus backdrop. And one may be sure, since she was an ardent lover of trees, that she exclaimed in admiration of the magnificent oaks, chestnuts, poplars, and evergreens that shaded all that pleasant plateau.

Everywhere she inspected. Every detail of the buildings inside and out came under her scrutiny. Wherever any stone was misplaced or dresser handle lacked a screw or curtain was a little torn, Dr. Rankin, paper and pencil in hand, was requested to note—and to remedy, at her expense.

But besides in that brief visit Mrs. McCormick lighted a small candle that was to become a group of bright light centers in the mountains. On that day she talked with Harlan Page Cory, who

was presently to be Home Missions executive for that presbytery. He told her of a community about forty miles away across the divide at Burnsville in Yancey County, North Carolina that earnestly desired a school. Burnsville was a county seat, like Jackson a strategic point, for courthouse and markets drew there people from the villages and cabins along the creeks and up the coves. The people were isolated, far from a railroad, without public schools worth the name. But they had an ambition for their children and a little while before they had asked Mr. Cory's aid in starting a school. It had been held in an old building, later in the courthouse. Recently a Burnsville man had given four acres as a site for a building and the cost of burning the first kiln of brick. But there was no way to go on. Could Mrs. McCormick see this as her work? She could. On the spot she authorized the expenditure of \$500 to burn the second kiln of brick and before long she had pledged enough to complete the building. Her next course was characteristic: she had the plans for the building sent to her, studied them carefully, made detailed suggestions. By 1899, at the suggestion of Mr. Cory, she named this academy the Stanley McCormick School.

She must have enjoyed visualizing it—built on a high rolling plateau between two fine ranges, the Black and the Green Mountains, on the outskirts of the little town. She was to see (though never with her eyes) that campus fill up with buildings of her giving, and still others were to rise after her death as a result of her interest. For—not even excepting a period of about three years when it was closed—this school remained a dear and constant charge, carried on her ledgers, her mind, and her heart, throughout the rest of her life.

On her way home from Tusculum Mrs. McCormick may have stopped at Morristown, Tennessee. The tradition to that effect persisted, but her papers do not tell the story. Here, however, is perhaps the most outstanding instance of her gifts to denominations other than Presbyterian—a Methodist school for Negroes.

Judson S. Hill, white president of Morristown Normal and Industrial College at Morristown, Tennessee, was the key to her interest. He had been a young Methodist minister, directed in 1881 by his bishop to create a normal school for Negroes out of a little grammar school in Morristown. He was practically the founder,

starting with the grammar school teacher in a small building that had been church, slave mart, war hospital. Sometime he must have told her the thrilling story of a boy sold with his slave mother at that slave mart, who later was converted there, and became an able member of the college faculty. Naturally Dr. Hill had deep local prejudice to combat. But gradually he won, the annual Commencement of the school became a town event, and when he died the whole town set aside business and mourned.

Dr. Hill came to see Mrs. McCormick and through the years she went along with his work, aiding in the erection of a building and with current expenses. Domestic science and manual training departments commended the work to her. Dr. Hill's accounts of the boys' work at cutting timber and making brick appealed.

Early in his work the buildings began to mount the hill. The little old first building remained, but a plateau on the northern side of the town, with a magnificent view of mountains, held the fine new structures as they rose.

Ten days after accepting her son Stanley's name for the school at Burnsville, Mrs. McCormick bestowed the name of his brother Harold on another school to which she had just given the breath of life. This was an academy at Elizabethton in Carter County, back on the Tennessee side of the divide. Davies Academy, built by the community in an eager desire to educate its children, had fallen into debt. Inspired by the Burnsville gift, a home missionary official brought the academy's plight to Mrs. McCormick. Here was another school at a strategic point. Would she set a light here too? Would she lift the debt and allow the school to be deeded to the Board of Home Missions? Again Mrs. McCormick said yes.

Needs of the mountain communities were brought to her in increasing number as she went farther into the field. But she held always to belief in concentration on a few schools in a given area. "I do believe," she once wrote, "more good will be derived from one strong school properly equipped and managed than from half a dozen weaklings without equipment. Believing this, it would seem poor policy to divide my support among so many schools that none should be benefitted thereby." This principle, by the way, is one that has been currently applied in the Presbyterian schools of the mountains.

At two additional "strategic points" in this region Mrs. McCor-

mick set school lights, smaller but needful: she housed the struggling day school at Flag Pond, Tennessee and built an attractive cottage for teachers. The two buildings brought a striking change to the community, a tiny village at the entrance to a number of coves. "Very few if any of the children," Mr. Cory wrote, after the new building was up, "had ever seen a school desk, and the ample blackboards encircling the rooms are a wonder to them." Mrs. McCormick named the school for him, the Cory School. At Erwin sixteen miles away, she built a teachers' home for the Dwight School. Both of these were in mountainous little Unicoi County.

She was now fully launched on a splendid adventure in education. In the early spring of 1901 Mrs. McCormick sent another pair of eyes to see these mountain schools for her. Her emissary was no less a person than Miss Mary McDowell, who at that time had already for eight years been head of the University of Chicago Settlement. "She wanted me to tell what she ought to do next," said Mary McDowell years later. Besides, she wished Miss McDowell to carry the settlement idea of neighborliness and living-with to the mountain workers in areas beyond Frances Goodrich's range.

Miss McDowell wrote the story of her trip as a report to Mrs. McCormick. It is a rare picture of the mountain country besides, as even a few passages will show.

The itinerary began at the Asheville schools, where Florence Stephenson became Miss McDowell's guide in penetrating the mountains. It included such novelties for the city settlement worker as fording Big Laurel Creek eighteen times in the course of a morning's drive and riding (or jolting, as her back testified) in a mountain wagon from point to point in the Laurel country of North Carolina and across into Tennessee. At Walnut Springs Miss McDowell had her first sight of this type of home mission work, a neat little schoolhouse used for a chapel as well and a pretty little home where the mission worker and the teachers lived, letting their model housekeeping speak for itself.

The next day's drive took her into Frances Goodrich's Laurel country. "Men, women and children shyly peeped out at us, or if out doors, stared with mild, wide-open eyes, suggesting some shy

creature from the depths of the woods. We always bowed as we passed and bade them 'good morning,' or 'how d'y,' and received in return a short, quick nod without a smile or change of expression. . . . We kept seeing very primitive people industrially, socially, and in every way one hundred years behind us. There was the overshot water wheel, which gave the power to cut the logs and grind the corn. There was the 'first' bridge: the log leveled off on one side and laid across the creek. . . . We could see through the open door of the cabins as we passed the weaving loom, and on the porch was often standing the spinning wheel and the flax wheel. . . ."

They had taken four or five hours to cover twelve hard miles when they reached a little settlement, "lit," and crossing a branch of the Big Laurel, entered a clean, attractive kitchen containing a mission worker—a McCormick Seminary graduate, his wife, and a Home Industrial school girl serving as cook. The young man, tall and sturdy, was preacher and teacher and competent handy man.

"After lunch eight little mountain girls came to the cottage to start a 'fancy-work' class. Such charming little women—in linsey-woolsey, of very ugly colors, but home-spun. They had wide-open birdlike eyes, shy and timid, and not until I told them about my little neighbor girls who came to sewing and embroidery at my house, and how these little city children had no Big Laurel Creek to wade in, or log bridge to walk across, and never saw the birds or flowers, mountains and trees as they saw them, did they smile a friendly human smile. . . ."

A mule-drawn wagon carried them on to Allanstand, to Miss Goodrich's cottage and the little schoolhouse where a service was being held; and on to Upper Shelton School, higher up in the mountains, where another Home Industrial girl and her brother were teaching and living. From this height Miss McDowell's wagon, driven by an illicit distiller, jounced her into Tennessee. When she insisted on climbing out on the top of the divide between North Carolina and Tennessee just to get one of the galax leaves and some of the holly, the driver said very gently, "Let her alone, she wants to take some of the prettiness home with her."

Now she was on her way to Flag Pond. Here, at the end of

about fifteen miles of rough jolting, she found on the side of a hill the school and a pretty little teachers' home. She was cordially welcomed and shown over the building, five large airy rooms.

Smallpox at Burnsville prevented a visit at this place so important in Mrs. McCormick's school interests. But Miss McDowell visited Tusculum briefly.

"I could see in these earnest, sturdy fellows the wide-eyed little chaps I met in the mountain schools, and felt that every one was a rich reward to his best friend, who cared for his development. They cheered me in a gentle boyish way, when I finished talking to them. I knew it was meant for the generous friend I represented to them."

That friend had only a short time before made to Tusculum a conditioned promise of a dormitory for women. If Mary McDowell had gone back just a year later she would have seen it, Virginia McCormick Hall, named by the donor for her elder daughter, "to be called in common parlance Virginia Hall."

Last on the schedule was the S. P. Lees Collegiate Institute. Miss McDowell gave her own impression of the school in outline, of the teachers and of general methods, which she considered rather backward. She was generous in praise of the new departments and their teachers and offered concrete suggestions.

Mary McDowell made another trip a year later, with the Stanley McCormick School as its objective. By this time Mrs. McCormick had built there not only the school building, but also the teachers' home and two cottages to be rented to families who could thus send their children to school. Then she decided to build a dormitory for girls, to be named Elizabeth Hall in honor of her granddaughter, Elizabeth McCormick. In October of 1902 it was time to decide exactly where Elizabeth Hall should stand and how it should face, and Mrs. McCormick enlisted Mary McDowell's aid.

Miss McDowell and a friend left Asheville at seven in the morning, driving forty miles through mountain counties. Gradually, as they went higher, the autumn colors grew more brilliant; and they came—at the hour of a glorious sunset—to the teachers' cottage at Burnsville, set on a hillside in full view of the mountains to the west and south. They were met with characteristic mountain hospitality, though "it is not easy for these people to be hospitable,

since butter is a luxury, meat almost unheard of, and even milk of a very poor quality very difficult to secure regularly."

Miss McDowell looked over the ground for the dormitory and decided to have it placed on the diagonal, "thus securing the sun in almost every room some time in the day. . . ."

She described the group including herself who joined in starting the excavation for the foundation. "It would have filled your heart with joy, to have heard these men speak of what it meant to Yancey County to have the school started there. . . . In their simple-hearted way they would take my hand, and look me in the eyes, and say how they had longed to see Mrs. McCormick, or some one who knew her and could tell them about her."

Of the academies, Mrs. McCormick came to closest grips with the problems of the Stanley McCormick School. She herself spoke of it as "the school I have labored for and cared for for many years—often working with Mr. Gorton, *in years past*, till late at night, when I was building there or perplexed about teachers, and so on."

There were indeed numerous perplexities, concerning both building and teachers. Yet so well was all done that surprise over the whole set-up of the school was a characteristic reaction of visitors, according to Laura Buffum, Mrs. McCormick's second domestic science teacher there. She wrote, in 1905:

"Burnsville is an old, quaint place, almost unchanged since the days when Charles Dudley Warner speaks of it in his 'Through Virginia on Horseback.' . . . All people who come to Burnsville to see us, are surprised and delighted with the school. They expect to find a 'little mountain school,' nothing to impress one especially. . . . But the fine boys and girls, their neat appearance . . . the fine buildings, the numbers and departments (especially the kindergarten and cooking departments) and the fact that a diploma of the school, with the exception of science, carries a boy or girl into one of the Southern colleges—all this in a remote mountain district, far from railroads or towns, amazes and delights them."

When a new principal was to be chosen, Mrs. McCormick would interview candidates. As each was selected she followed him into his work with deep interest and on occasion with careful supervision calculated to bring him up in the way he should go. One received the following, so expressive of its writer's attention to detail:

"I notice the expression in yours of July 17 about the residence 'The gutters have blown down' but without going on to explain the possibility or impossibility of their being 'lifted up' in place again. . . . You will see the need of your having some practical suggestions, and making mental observations—and becoming able to see *accurately*—and to see and report to us things as they *actually* are. . . . And now we wish to ask that you will exercise some oversight *on this job* [finishing a building] as it progresses. . . . When building is going on I watch the operation narrowly."

Through a period of several years the thread of the story was the pursuit of T. U. Chesebrough for principal. From their first interview Mrs. McCormick was persuaded that he was the man for the place and with characteristic tenacity she clung to her purpose of getting him despite setbacks. Finally after the drawing up of an agreement of many heads, he accepted. When all was done, Mrs. McCormick was deeply content. Her secretary wrote: "Now that Mr. C. is at the head Mrs. McCormick has taken fresh heart and is full of enthusiasm and hope for the future of the work."

Under Mr. Chesebrough's administration, manual training ran to a four-year course, including woodworking, mechanical drawing, metal work. Instruction in agriculture was provided with an elective in poultry raising. All the girls were required to take home economics. Meantime the academic work held firm.

Early in 1917 Mr. and Mrs. Chesebrough made a general survey of the situation: the War and Mrs. McCormick's heavy burdens in that connection; the severe disaffection of a certain group toward the administration; the changing conditions in the mountains, as good highways came in. Burnsville, forty miles from Asheville, was close to the city when motor cars could make the trip in an hour or so. This brought the better equipped mission schools of Asheville and Hot Springs within reach of Yancey County boys and girls. A new county high school had come into existence half a mile away from the Stanley McCormick School.

So when in 1917 Mrs. McCormick invited Mr. and Mrs. Chesebrough to come and talk over conditions and criticisms, they ended by laying before her a proposal that the school be discontinued. Let Mrs. Chesebrough tell it in the light of many years later. "Mrs. McCormick's first question was 'But what of the boys and girls?' Then we gave her the list of the few who really needed

mission school help, and told her they could be cared for in other schools. . . . Her broad statesmanship was so evident here. It was a struggle—the school had been a dear project, named for a loved son. . . . But she came to the decision, and commissioned us to place forty or so boys and girls in Dorland, Asheville Normal and Farm School at her expense.”

Stanley McCormick School was to open again a few years later for a final chapter. Meantime the Harold McCormick School was about to close, for an excellent reason.

Mrs. McCormick's first gift to this institution had set it on its feet—lifting the debt, finishing and furnishing the sturdy, square brick school building. A few years later she built a teachers' cottage to accommodate the two teachers. She provided domestic science equipment. The buildings stood on a hill commanding a beautiful mountain view and overlooking town, valley, two rivers—the Watauga and the Doe. Whoever wrote to Mrs. McCormick of this fair region always mentioned the historic sycamore near the fords of the Watauga, where the Reverend Samuel Doak had prayed for the doughty mountaineers who were to turn the tide of the Revolution at King's Mountain.

A few years after building the cottage, Mrs. McCormick definitely took hold of the school and made it practically hers. On a plan that she appears to have initiated it had been transferred from the charge of the Home Missions Board to that of the trustees of Greeneville and Tusculum College, to which the academy was designed to supply students. A principal, Mr. William C. Clemens, was secured and Mrs. McCormick paid him a fixed amount, to form the basis for operating the school. Eventually the regular school term of the county was combined with the academy's work and county funds supplemented the academy's income. During its later years the school was flourishing in a modest way. It ceased operation in 1918 because Elizabethton's "free" school had gathered sufficient strength to carry the responsibility alone; its building became a part of that system.

The most delightful chapter of this story was the friendship of Mrs. McCormick and a little boy: The third son of the principal at Harold McCormick School—by no means a "sissy"—had elected to study domestic science. And among other things, when he was ten he made an apron of lawn, with long strings, cross-stitched the

hem with blue silk and added clusters of blue forget-me-nots. "It really was lovely," his mother admitted, "with every stitch by hand—short and true." And at Christmas time he decided to send it along with a box of holly to Mrs. McCormick, his parents' benefactor and friend.

The results were momentous. Mrs. McCormick, very appreciative, wrote to the boy and the correspondence continued. When Mrs. McCormick paid a between-trains visit at Tusculum the family from Elizabethton was present to meet her—the parents for conference, the boy to meet his friend. Their meeting was for Harold Clemens a high moment.

Later she helped with his expenses at Tusculum. One year she put him on the McCormick farm in Virginia. The boy turned in a satisfactory summer; his bent, however, was mechanical. Eventually Mrs. McCormick sent him to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for a four-year course. His later career as a production engineer with the Du Pont Company well justified his own choice of schooling and her wise willingness to develop his gifts.

The story of this boy in relation to Mrs. McCormick is only one of many such instances. To more than twenty young people not relatives Mrs. McCormick supplied means of education, adding affection and advice to her checks. Yet only one protégé made her an apron!

More than once serious situations arose in connection with these schools. Sharp divisions of opinion over a principal or a teacher cleft a community; or an official brought reasons why someone should leave a school for its good. To such problems Mrs. McCormick gave close attention, carefully weighing the evidence, not jumping to conclusions nor exercising power with autocratic dogmatism. In at least one instance she sent a representative to the spot; in other situations she sought the testimony by letter of those who might have light to give. In large measure she followed her usual course of relying on the judgment of supervising officials whom she had learned to trust; but she took no one's word blindly. In the perspective of years, her decisions in the community—Burnsville—where the most difficult decisions had to be made, appeared to a wise onlooker who knew them closely, to have been well justified.

The Dorland Institute at Hot Springs, North Carolina, third in the group of academies to which Mrs. McCormick contributed

over a long period, was in a different relation to her from the schools at Burnsville and Elizabethton. She had nothing to do with its founding or its administrative problems. Her contribution was largely in terms of domestic science and involved a new feature: "practice cottages"—the first to be used in any school under the Northern Presbyterian Woman's Board of Home Missions and perhaps the earliest in this region. It was Miss Julia E. Phillips, energetic principal of the school, who had the idea. There was a four-room cottage on the grounds back of the girls' dormitory, made of scraps from a demolished building, but usable. If fitted up, it would house six girls who, by doing all their own work under direction, could learn the essentials of housekeeping. Mrs. McCormick rose to the idea at once, providing \$300 to fit up the house.

A year later Miss Phillips proposed another old cottage for renovation and again without hesitation Mrs. McCormick responded. The same thing happened a third time. The first little house did not remain in service, but the other two became McCormick Cottages No. 1 and No. 2. They stood together on a choice site at the top of a steep hill, a hill from which the girls looked up to the dark mountain behind them and out over the wide circle of mountains before them, beyond the town, a hill from which they saw glorious sunrise and sunset and wheeling stars.

Groups of girls occupied the cottages in rotation, so that about sixty had this benefit during the year. Mrs. McCormick sent a fixed amount annually to maintain the cottages, and as prices rose the amount was doubled. She did not meet the suggestion that the cottages, old and rickety, should be replaced. But to provide home training for all the students, she bought domestic science equipment for installation in a wing of the dormitory, and a trained teacher directed the work.

In her remaining years Mrs. McCormick was to see the "practice cottage" idea put in force all along the Presbyterian line from Porto Rico to Alaska. Today the Dorland-Bell School (a later name) carries on its fine program as part of the Warren H. Wilson Junior College at Swannanoa, North Carolina.

What Mrs. McCormick meant to Tusculum College through the years is well indicated by what happens there on every February 8th. For her birthday has been since 1915 "McCormick Day" on the campus. She consented to this observance only on condition

that the students might have active part in it and that something useful might be accomplished. So "McCormick Day" has three aspects: Mrs. McCormick is gratefully remembered at a beautiful memorial service; the campus and buildings are subjected to an energetic spring cleaning, a direct tribute to her insistence on neatness of school grounds and buildings; and there is open house throughout all the dormitories. The girls scan the boys' housekeeping, and the boys estimate the girls', and both inspect the faculty's home-making. And throughout the campus Mrs. McCormick's gifts are remembered, including the gift of her warm personal devotion to the college, its works, and its workers. It was on such a day that, many years after her death, Mrs. McCormick's grandsons, Cyrus and Gordon McCormick, gave to Tusculum the remainder of a trust fund that she had established. It amounted to about \$275,000.

Among those who attend the McCormick Day services there are still, as this is written, a few who knew Mrs. McCormick. Chief among them is Dr. Landon Carter Haynes, its beloved professor emeritus of mathematics, ninety-nine years old, who can look all the way back past the very beginnings of Mrs. McCormick's interest. Sixty-five years a professor at Tusculum, this Tennessean came from Greeneville to the struggling little school that was the Tusculum of 1872, a school with one building and a faculty of four. Here the tall, angular, Lincolnesque boy worked his way through academy and college, living on little and that cooked by himself in his room. In 1877, when he graduated, he became tutor of ancient languages. Three years later he became professor of mathematics, continuing until 1943, when he became professor emeritus—a splendid career of scholarship, devoted loyalty, and wide-reaching influence. Through many of these years he gave all that he had—and that was much—for a salary of \$450 to \$600 a year, more than once refusing attractive offers away from the mountains.

Perhaps no building for which she was responsible interested Mrs. McCormick more than the first dormitory for women at Tusculum, "Virginia Hall." For its building and furnishings she gave some \$20,000, the community buying eleven acres of needed land and raising an additional amount. She employed Louis H. Sullivan to make the plans and she did indeed "watch the operation narrowly," even for a part of the time from overseas.

She entered closely into the details of selection not only of plans but of materials, and of placing, for example, of the prosaic laundry and boiler plant. No details were too small for her interest and concern; no practice of contractor or superintendent escaped her attention.

When it was time to choose furnishings, she gave the selection of bureaus and beds the benefit of her taste and her keen sense of values. "I have spent the morning at a large store on the subject of furniture," she wrote to Tusculum's president. "It is truly much easier to have an idea in the mind, than to find the reality. The bureaus and wash stands I saw were not right in color, nor in the manner of making them." The pieces would have to be ordered. She then asked for some scrap that showed the color of the varnished woodwork, so that she might choose the bureaus and wash stands to harmonize. The piece, she explained with particularity, should be sawed as thin as a quarter inch, put in an envelope, and mailed to her—quickly.

Among the first occupants of the new dormitory was Bertha L. Roach, who had been for two years Mrs. McCormick's excellent teacher of domestic science—and a highly successful one—at S. P. Lees Collegiate Institute. Mrs. McCormick haled Miss Roach to Tusculum to "demonstrate" domestic science at the Conference, a new thing in the region. With a group of charming little girls of faculty families as a demonstration unit, she gave simple lessons, showing what each teacher could do in her own kitchen with her own little mountaineers.

The outcome of Miss Roach's visit to Tusculum was that she was transferred to that school. Throughout her three years there Mrs. McCormick paid her salary, bought materials, renewed equipment when Miss Roach could prove the need, and added pleasant friendly extras for teacher and pupils. When Bertha Roach resigned to be married, Mrs. McCormick continued salary and kindnesses to the two who filled the post in her remaining years.

There were crises, of course. Perhaps the most serious centered around the question of union with Washington College, some fourteen miles away. If the tradition is true that Dr. Samuel Doak left Washington College in a pique, to come on down the valley to Tusculum, the long rivalry of the two schools seems a logical consequence. But however founded, they were certainly too close to-

gether, and the presence of a third Presbyterian School only seventy-five miles distant, Maryville College, didn't help. Conferences to consider union, however, always ended with three schools.

Later, the question concerned only the two close neighbors, Tusculum and Washington. After the College Board had begun to extend aid, it took a hand. Finally a plan of union that the Board had approved was presented to Mrs. McCormick by Tusculum's president. It contemplated a preparatory school at each place, with the college department centrally located in a Tennessee city. The word of comment that Dr. Coile asked Mrs. McCormick to give came to him direct, pointed. She suggested that this was practically starting a new college and said that if this plan was right she had been "wrong, and short sighted, and wasteful, in erecting the buildings at Tusculum instead of the new point now thought of."

The plan was defeated. And the clouds darkened: the College Board withheld its promised grant. There was a sharp conflict over Tusculum's president, who resigned in a mood of pessimism concerning Tusculum's future. Mrs. McCormick's pledge was withdrawn.

Light began to break through the gloom when, in reply to a request from Tusculum for an interview, Mrs. McCormick received Dr. Haynes. In the peace and beauty of Clayton Lodge she asked questions that penetrated to the core of the Tusculum situation, and the outcome was a telegram from Dr. Haynes to the campus saying: "Mrs. McCormick will help this year Go ahead." Before the middle of 1908 the two schools had united, as Washington and Tusculum College, under a detailed plan of organization with one president, two deans.

Thus it was settled, or so it seemed. But the end of the story revealed a climax as surprising as that of a mystery serial.

Meantime, of course, there was a new president for the consolidated school. And in choosing him Mrs. McCormick had a leading voice. He was Charles Oliver Gray, who had come from the North to Marshall, North Carolina, to be chairman of the Home Missions Committee of the Presbytery of French Broad. As treasurer of Stanley McCormick School he had met Mrs. McCormick and she liked him. It was the recollection of the chairman of Tusculum's Board of Trustees, Mr. Henry R. Brown, that during the search for the right man Mrs. McCormick always met any suggestion

with word of her wish for "the man from Marshall." Before the year was out she had offered to build a president's house on a pleasant slope just beyond the campus.

But the lot of president of the two-part college was not a happy one. Washington College felt humiliated, slighted. Dr. Gray, pacific if ever a man was, tried hard to bring real peace, even going so far as to live three days a week at Washington College. Tension mounted to alarming heights. Thus it remained for nearly four years. Then, dramatically, the climax: the revelation that on the 13th of May, 1908, when "union" was voted on, there had been no quorum of Washington College trustees, therefore no legal vote to unite, therefore no union. In 1912, after the case had been carried to the State Supreme Court (a brief word for months of harrowing trouble) the union was annulled.

It was while the college was still Washington and Tusculum that Mrs. McCormick paid her second visit to the Tusculum campus, in the summer of 1911. This time it was not a surprise, though the notice was short: she telegraphed to Dr. Gray that she would stop off. Again there was much scurrying about, for Mrs. Gray had gone to Asheville. Hastily summoned, she caught at Knoxville the same train on which the distinguished guest was riding. By staying out of sight she was able to join the welcoming committee at the Greeneville station without Mrs. McCormick's knowledge that a holiday had been cancelled. Other faculty wives had given the president's house the final touches and all was ready when the guest, with secretary and maid, drove out from Greeneville. It was one of the perfect times of year in that country, May—when the exquisite beauty of rhododendron was at its height in the mountains and all the trees were in full but still tender green.

Arriving before lunch, she spent the afternoon in rest and a tour of the campus—as before, inspecting and suggesting. The domestic science classes, under Edith L. Stetson, a teacher whom she had chosen, gave her a dinner that night and a lunch the next day; some of the music pupils sang for her; and on the second day, after chapel, where she characteristically refused to be introduced, she shook hands with all the students as they filed past. Some of these she recognized from photographs, some she stopped with special questions; to all she conveyed her lovely interest.

There were other gifts beside buildings: a contribution of some

\$127,000 to endowment through the years, payment of teachers' salaries, patient cheerful response to anxious word of deficits, maintenance of the home economics department. And running through the whole story is a thread of warm kindness to president, professors, students: summer sessions at the University of Chicago that aided their work; treatment at the hospital for their illnesses; gifts to promote summer trips; a hundred and one thoughtful additions to happiness.

"If there was nothing more than what she did for Tusculum College, her life was well worth living."

In January 1921 the Stanley McCormick School was reopened under Mrs. McCormick's care. This came about as the result of a meeting of two war workers overseas—Warren H. Wilson, Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions and Leroy F. Jackson of the State College of Washington. Dr. Wilson had a dream of developing the Stanley McCormick School as a Folk School where the older young people of those mountains might find the opportunity they had missed. In Mr. Jackson he found the man to his purpose and, setting the project before Mrs. McCormick, secured her support. The school had indeed been dear to her; she cared deeply to help the mountain people, to go on with what she had started. At nearly eighty-six she began again with enthusiasm.

She put about \$35,000 into repairs on the old buildings and the erection of new ones, including workshop and home economics quarters. She gave sympathetic encouragement to the progressive program these two men were applying. Home economics of course was stressed; nursing the sick and care of babies were added; a practice cottage was established where six girls for six week periods lived and worked. There was a baby in the practice cottage, too, rented from a foundling home and mothered each week by a different girl.

Mrs. McCormick's death cut short the program of expansion. Her heirs carried on her plans, adding support of their own. After a time the school was closed. Then under pressure of eagerness on the part of local people and educational leaders in the state, Mr. Jackson and the faculty tried to buy back the property from the Board and to run the school by raising other funds. They called

it the Carolina New College. For a year the faculty taught with no compensation but board and quarters. The bankruptcy of Asheville made many pledges void and the Stanley McCormick School, for its final period, was again the charge of the Presbyterian Board.

Chapter 18

UPHOLDING

MISSIONARY HANDS

MRS. McCORMICK'S children used to call her home a "halfway house between the Orient and the West." There was always a coming and going of missionary folk—waiting for her in a downstairs room, presenting a case to her secretary, meeting her warm welcome in the library or her own room, remaining as her guests under the pressure of her hospitality and motherly care, departing often with a promise or a check, always with encouragement and inspiration.

The missionary picture she saw has changed, especially of course where Communism is in power or menacing, but also in other places under the influence of new nationalisms. But the cause to which she gave so much in love, interest, money, through a long period of years, carries on—carries on, though greatly hampered, even in areas under highest pressure.

She would not have liked what has happened in China and North Korea: the end of an era in missions, the suppressions, the persecutions. One may guess that she would have felt the tremendous responsibility of Christianity as the only long-range effective foe of Communism. And it certainly would not have been in her nature to lack faith and hope for the future.

Her family was one in which an interest in the spread of Christianity was as natural as breathing. Clarissa and Maria Fowler and Jane Merick must have given support to whatever missionary activities, in that early day, their church—the Methodist Episcopal—undertook. It was still an early day in American foreign missions: the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church had been founded in 1819 and the first foreign missionary of that church had gone out to Liberia only in 1832. We do not

know what manner of missionary received young Nettie's tiny contributions at Falley Seminary—the six cents and the twenty-five cents entered in her little account book, mentioned earlier. At Genesee Wesleyan we are on firmer ground; there, it will be remembered, she took active part in missionary work as “essayist” and “collector” in a society that may very well have felt the zeal and fervor of pioneers.

In less than three years after her schooling at Lima, Nettie Fowler, now Mrs. Cyrus Hall McCormick, had become wholeheartedly Presbyterian, accepting her husband's church and all its interests along with her husband. From this time on the church missionary picture was chiefly in Presbyterian colors, though she gave also, as the narrative will show, to other denominations. “She was very much a Presbyterian,” some one said of her, “but more largely a Christian.”

This foreign missionary interest was the flowering of something in Mrs. McCormick's own life and spirit. Though it was not at odds with her husband's thought and practice, it was hardly an inheritance from him as was the Seminary. He gave modestly to foreign missions through his church; but among the men and women with causes who came to the McCormick door in his time, his children did not recall missionaries.

To be sure, there was increase in her income, but there was also deepening interest in foreign missions in the religious world at large. Medical missions had been developing. The idea of higher education as a means of securing Christian leadership had taken strong hold. The conception of ministry to the whole man—body, mind, spirit—was growing. So was the conception of union in educational and other missionary work.

All this came about in the missionary lifetime of Mrs. McCormick and she shared in these developments. Not for a moment did she lose sight of the primary missionary objective nor rationalize it into something else. But she was in the van in these newer expansive movements.

The turn of the century marked the rising tide of interest in missions. There followed for Mrs. McCormick some twenty years of considered giving in crescendo—giving that involved expenditure of time, thought, and personal energy as well as money. When she was nearly eighty-seven she wrote: “Recently there has been

so much calling here on the part of the various missionaries home on furloughs, teachers and ministers, and while I have to put in the stated number of hours of rest I have not been doing much else." But she loved it.

Her personal ministration to missionary folk is a line of gold running all through the story. But sometimes the younger relatives found them tryingly numerous about the house. "She was very beamy eyed if you showed any interest at all," a grandson said.

She knew what was going forward in every field to which she gave and in others too. Again and again a visiting missionary was amazed to hear her speak of his station as if she knew the very lie of the land as well as the curriculum of his school or the equipment of his hospital. "Her knowledge of the foreign missionary work and of the foreign missionaries of our church," wrote Dr. Robert E. Speer, Board Secretary during most of this period, "was something amazing. I doubt if there was a mission station of ours anywhere in the world which she did not know and with whose workers she was unacquainted." And about the qualities that she brought to bear on the many-sided problems presented to her in this field he wrote: "She had the most clear and instantaneous discernment of the real issues. Her judgments both of movements and persons were as gentle as they could be, and yet as unfailingly keen and penetrating. No sham could deceive her. . . ."

Anyone touring the mission lands in the last year or two of Mrs. McCormick's life would have encountered visible evidences of her interest at many places. But in almost every instance the gift of, or to, a building was only part of an interest expressed in many ways and usually extending over many years. Endowment sometimes supplemented building, deficits were often met, salaries were paid, special needs supplied—such practical matters as improved water supply, or a motor cycle, or a moving-picture film, or a typewriter. She was flexible enough to meet the current need.

With this background, we may turn the pages of the record in various countries for a few impressions of Mrs. McCormick's ways of giving to this cause, a few incidents to high-light.

By 1917 the tide was high. In that year Mrs. McCormick made two gifts that have an interesting link in chronology. Dr. Samuel M. Jordan, president of the future Alborz College of Teheran,

went to see her in Chicago. He came away with a pledge for \$25,000 to erect the first college building on a new campus.

This was an important contribution to the special campaign then in progress, and Dr. Robert E. Speer, Board Secretary, called to thank Mrs. McCormick for her splendid gift. It must have been a strain on the composure even of that controlled gentleman when she asked, "Dr. Speer, isn't there some other station that needs help?" He was quite able to reply, however. "Yes," he said, "Dr. McKean, of Chiangmai, Siam, is seeking funds to build a hospital. Shall I send him to you?" With her consent he hastened to summon that devoted man of God, of missions, and of medicine. He too went away with a pledge for \$25,000. Each of these pledges came as the logical climax of a long-sustained interest, of years of sympathetic understanding and response.

Let us look back down the Siam perspective as she saw it: A colorful country, Siam (now Thailand), of great physical beauty, especially in the mountainous North; picturesque with tropical foliage, elephants, bejewelled temples and yellow-robed Buddhist priests; a warm land of easygoing poverty; a pleasant, unaggressive, brown-skinned people with a history stretching back into tradition—Lao in the north, Siamese in the south (their differences fading after the seven-weeks' river journey between Bangkok and Chiangmai was reduced by the railroad to twenty comfortable hours); a country that has rejoiced in a succession of progressive sovereigns, grateful to missionaries for modern ideas in medicine and education.

A gift to help found a leper asylum was Mrs. McCormick's first large contribution to medical missions in Siam. When Dr. James W. McKean came collecting funds for his leper asylum, his resources consisted of a hundred and sixty acres of jungle land given to him by his friend and long-time patient, the Governor of Chiangmai. The site, on an island, had been the home of the Governor's pet elephant, in exile for his sins. When at last that surly beast passed on, leaving the island a jungle, Dr. McKean got the land. Then he came home to gather money, leaving "six homeless lepers sitting under the shade of the trees awaiting better days."

A plain, modest little man, Dr. McKean had a light and a power that carried far. Going out to North Siam in 1889, he had found the country ridden with smallpox. Though vaccination had been

introduced there were no facilities for making the vaccine. So Dr. McKean set up a laboratory in a shed and boldly asked the Governor of Burma for a trained worker to teach the Siamese how to make it. The Burmese Governor lent a man, and with his aid Dr. McKean proceeded to reduce that scourge. His next campaign was in the interests of the large, tragic leper population, which knew only poverty and pain and hate and fear. The asylum that he founded was the first in North Siam. He had the joy of bringing comfort to those pitiful bodies and peace to many souls.

Other gifts followed and finally Mrs. McCormick gave the ward block of a hospital. Different groups in the community—Siamese, Chinese, Indians, Burmese, Sikhs, Shans—all contributed. Two years after Mrs. McCormick's death McCormick Hospital was opened by Prince Adison, a brother of King Chulalongkorn, who paid high tribute to the American benefactor of his people. Another Prince, Mahidol, while Crown Prince, had shocked his royal relatives by studying medicine at Harvard and then entering McCormick Hospital, incognito, for his hospital experience. His early death was a loss to mission and country.

When Dr. McKean left, Dr. Edwin C. Cort became superintendent and Mrs. Cort, dietitian. The devotion that these workers (who had already given long years to this field) and their quite inadequate staff put into the building up of this institution came to be known as the "McCormick spirit." Each served longer hours than were humanly justifiable, Dr. Cort himself taking two twenty-four-hour stretches each week. In the old hospital it was customary for the relatives to come along with the patient and live there, preparing his food and their own in an adjacent shed and sleeping all over the place. That was changed; the hospital was put on a modern, controlled basis. And it succeeded, caring for hundreds of patients and evangelizing while healing. The spread of its influence is illustrated by a woman from a distant village who came to the hospital and said, "I want to know about Dr. Cort's God."

Though the hospital was turned over to the Government during the Japanese occupation and its buildings deteriorated, it was renewed in following years. It is now the largest, as well as the oldest, Mission hospital in Thailand—modern, well-equipped, with 150 beds and highly trained personnel, including Thai doctors and

nurses. And the memory of Mrs. McCormick is still held in high regard.

In Persia (now Iran) the other country of that twin gift of 1917 Mrs. McCormick had met earlier an interesting challenge. Though the hospital at Teheran had been operating with very little provision for women, yet they came—every kind of woman, with every kind of illness, some walking long weary distances. The need had become desperate when one day a Persian princess, widow of a prime minister, volunteered to give the money for a women's pavilion. It would be a modest affair of three or four rooms, but the first women's hospital in Persia. The joyful word went hurrying across the world; when it reached Mrs. McCormick by letter from Dr. John G. Wishard, superintendent, she promptly offered to match the \$2000 gift of the princess with a like sum to furnish and support the new wing.

Later, Mrs. McCormick adopted into her interest Dr. Wishard's successor, young Dr. Joseph W. Cook. Responsive to his appeals, she agreed to support for three years a nurse whom she would approve. Dr. Cook's letters from Persia are still thrilling reading. He wrote: "Forty-one people who came with one or two blind eyes now can see—many of them were blind in both eyes—a girl of twenty blind in both eyes for eight years was led 12 days' journey and I'm thankful to say both eyes turned out perfectly. If medical men at home realized what joy it is to be here helping where few are to help, there would be a rush which the Boards could not take care of."

There was a major educational interest too. Standards of native education were low. So when Dr. Samuel J. Jordan, also of Teheran, had the dream of a college, it was inspired by a desire to serve the missionary cause and at the same time to raise these standards. He took his dream to Mrs. McCormick's doorstep in 1907: a dream of combining his boys' high school and a similar girls' school into an institution that could be carried to college level. She sent him on his way rejoicing in a three-year provision for a science teacher and other aid.

When Dr. Jordan came home in 1917 he could report such progress that Mrs. McCormick responded to the picture of growth and of need with the gift for a new building referred to earlier. Back in Persia, Dr. Jordan confronted famine conditions and the

mission was deep in relief work. He himself all but died of typhus. But building went on, with the labor of those on relief, to a happy conclusion, and the school carried on as a missionary institution until in 1940 the government of Iran took over this and all other foreign schools.

Mrs. McCormick had a tie of remote kinship with a Persia missionary, which added to her interest. He was Dr. Lewis F. Esselstyn, preacher and teacher, linked with her through her beloved grandmother, Maria Esselstyn Fowler. Though she did not know him until the late nineties, she spoke of him with pride as a kinsman and expected him to visit her on his furloughs.

It was Dr. Esselstyn who, after years at Teheran, was chosen to found a station at Meshed, a shrine city of Mohammedanism with a sacred tomb in its heart, where fanatical devotion made the missionary's way difficult. When he first went there he was mobbed and only rescued by the British consulate. "Twenty years later . . ." in Dr. Speer's words, "his presence as a permanent resident was quietly accepted by the people, and soon no figure was better known in the city than his, with his bald head and red beard."

Persia, and especially Urumia in the northwest, suffered during the First World War perhaps more than any other country. Though neutral, it was a battleground—invaded again and again, trampled by opposing armies, wrecked and ravaged. Dr. Esselstyn, then at Meshed, was one of several who died under the heavy strain.

Korea—one approaches the thought of this ravaged country with dread. But certain memories have warm appeal. On a day in October of 1906 a certain great figure in Korean missions came to Mrs. McCormick's door. He was Samuel A. Moffett, a pioneer in northern Korea, who during his forty-six years of hard, splendid service shared in the beginnings of Protestant missionary work in one of the ancient cities of the world, Pyengyang, took part in its rapid development, and lived to counsel in the dark days of Japanese domination. He came to Mrs. McCormick in the very year when Korea's long martyrdom began.

Dr. Moffett brought back from Korea for Mrs. McCormick ten letters, every one of them an expression of gratitude for the training that the writer had received at McCormick Theological Seminary and of hope for a similar seminary to be built at Pyengyang.

These McCormick "boys" ventured to suggest that as she was the mother of the Seminary in Chicago, she should become the grandmother of a seminary in Korea. Already there was a class of fifty earnest men, ready for leadership training. But they had no building, no equipment. Dr. Moffett too was a McCormick graduate, in the class of 1889, the first McCormick man to go to this country which the first Protestant missionary had entered only about five years before.

When Dr. Moffett had gone to Pyengyang there had been not a single Christian, and stones had been thrown at him. Now a thousand Christians saw him off as he went home to find help for their fifty potential pastors. Some of these things the letters told Mrs. McCormick. The rest was for Dr. Moffett to tell when he reached Rush Street.

Perhaps Mrs. McCormick asked him to tell of his own arrival in Pyengyang in that early day so soon after the "Hermit Nation" was opened. He went when foreigners were still rare in Korea, and he was such an object of curiosity that the road before his house was sometimes blocked. Koreans, black-haired, black-eyed, in voluminous dress, found this man's tall blondness, strikingly Anglo-Saxon features, and European dress a marvel.

He might have told her many tales of these amiable people, men and women in billowing glistening white, the men topped with queer "Happy Hooligan" hats built to accommodate the precious topknot. He might have analyzed their religious situation—Buddhism dying under the impact of Confucianism, ancestor worship and animism prevalent, but no national church. Of course they would have talked of the political plight of Korea.

And he would have told, certainly, about Korea missionaries. A Chicago friend of Mrs. McCormick, Lillias Horton, missionary under the Board of the Northwest, had been among other things physician to the Queen and had married Horace G. Underwood, a pioneer in Korea and a vital force there for long years. Dr. Moffett would have told her about the Underwoods.

He must have told of the remarkable responsiveness of Koreans to the Christian teaching: of the great Bible classes held annually for several days, which Christians traveled miles to attend at their own expense; of the growth of churches throughout this land of villages—churches maintained under the care of native leaders,

with occasional visits from the supervising missionary. "I am in charge of all North Pyeng An Do—about 65 churches," one of the McCormick Seminary men wrote. "It keeps me on the road constantly. One of the Koreans said that I would scarcely be able to visit all the churches if I did no more than ride by the church door on my wheel and yell as I passed." Until a few years before, this mission had kept almost its whole emphasis on the direct evangelistic method, on preaching, rather than the creation of institutions. But now it realized that the time had come to provide leader training. That was why those fifty men awaited a building.

Out of all this presentation came not only a home for this training school, but when a new building was needed, a new home for which \$35,000 was necessary. Mrs. McCormick's grandmotherly relation to theological education in Korea was clear.

She helped others of the educational institutions which the Korea mission added to its program. All were closed even before Japan and the United States were at war; the Japanese Government, considering colleges and academies part of the national system of education, demanded that pupils and teachers attend at the Shinto shrines. Rather than submit, the Mission shut the school doors. Later, the same demand was made on the Seminary, where the Mission, in a different legal situation, "postponed" opening. The buildings—barred to religious uses—stood there a silent witness to the faith of those who had built and used them. Worse was to come, as all the world knows, in the Korean war. Of course the Seminary at Pyengyang, in Communist North Korea, is now lost to Christian service. In South Korea, where work, workers, buildings all suffered appallingly, the Christian church goes forward, despite terrific handicaps, strongly, heroically.

As with Korea, one dreads to contemplate what has happened to such interests as Mrs. McCormick's in China. But all is not lost by any means. For both the sake of history and the sake of hope it is worth while to look back briefly as well as forward.

Early in this century the teachers and students of Shantung College, the first of the group later known as the Christian Colleges of China, sent a letter by their president to "The most worthy and esteemed men of Great America"—a letter written on red paper in beautiful Chinese style. A translation came into Mrs. McCormick's hands and she read a Chinese view of China:

"China just now is as one just waking from a dream, as one rousing from the drowsiness of wine. We now are aware that in the learning and religion of the exalted countries of the West there is real efficiency and power. Therefore our Emperor and his people together with our officials, both higher and lower, are arousing themselves to throw off the shortcomings of the past and to advance the learning of the West."

This was the voice of China at the beginning of one of the most remarkable transformations in history. Out of the horrors of the Boxer rebellion and the horrors of its quelling, China roused to a new sense of destiny and to a driving demand for the Western learning. Within a few years the famous old government examination halls were abolished. By thousands Chinese students flocked into Japan, Europe, America for the new education.

In this vast change of attitude missionary forces were quick to see opportunity. All of the many denominations in China, European and American, had an urgency upon them. Such open doors must be entered. The Young Men's Christian Association, alert to the stupendous forces at work, was directing its program toward students, seeking to develop Christian leadership for the new China. Church missionaries responded more and more to the new spirit. The church in the United States more and more rose to the need.

It was in response to appeals made from this new point of view that Mrs. McCormick's larger gifts to China missions were made. They were chiefly contributions to Christian education. Three colleges won her continuous interest—one of them undenominational, the other two union institutions later included in that remarkable group known as the Christian Colleges in China.

Today there are no "Christian Colleges" in Communist China. These colleges are operating as educational institutions in Communist hands, specializing along various lines. But in Hongkong the Christian Chung Chi College is serving, temporarily in rented buildings, and has sent out its first graduating class. At Taipei on Formosa, Tunghai University is open and working. And among Chinese elsewhere in the world the United Board for Christian Colleges in China (now the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia) and mission boards are at work, with the aid of Chinese leaders trained in the "Christian colleges" of the mainland.

The China college that came first in Mrs. McCormick's interest was one far in the South—Canton Christian College in her time. Its home was a beautiful campus on an island of the Pearl River below Canton—on a height overlooking rice fields, the crowded city, the saffron and tawny sails of junks, White Cloud Mountain blue-gray in the distance. Its origin lay in a petition for a school made in the eighties by leading Chinese merchants and scholars. Dr. Andrew P. Happer, "a great warhorse of Presbyterian missions," came home to raise money to found it as a Presbyterian institution; but by the time Mrs. McCormick made her first gift the school was undenominational. It had suffered grievous ups and downs. And when Mrs. McCormick began to give, through the agency of Herbert E. House, it had about thirty students.

This Mr. House was a remarkable man who, from rough work on a Chicago River tugboat, had educated himself all the way through McCormick Theological Seminary. Then as a missionary in China he had become tutor of Yuan Shih-kai's son and now was bringing China to Americans. Evidently he impressed Mrs. McCormick, for though the conditions of a gift that she made were not fulfilled she paid the pledge, a rare instance.

When the cornerstone of the first permanent building was laid, prospects brightened. Nearby, after a time, stood the two faculty residences for which Mrs. McCormick supplied the funds—McCormick Lodges No. 1 and No. 2, pleasant, comfortable buildings in modified Chinese style.

One by one Mrs. McCormick received into her friendship faculty and trustees, entertaining them as they came through Chicago, taking on personal needs, writing them letters, and adding from time to time her sustaining gifts. A gift to Dr. C. K. Edmunds, a faculty member who became president in 1907, was unusual. For three years his family had been living in California because the health of a child required it, while he commuted in a big way between Canton and the New York headquarters. Learning about it, Mrs. McCormick recommended life near New York. "You go to Chappaqua, New York," she directed. "That is where my husband chopped wood with Horace Greeley. If you find something that suits you I will pay the rent for the first year." He located a desirable place and she paid the rent for three years.

She carried this school on her heart all through the years, and watched its steady, sound growth with keen interest.

The story of what Mrs. McCormick did for the college that was later to be Shantung Christian University in the province of Shantung—home of the Chinese sages, Confucius and Mencius—introduces one of her closest missionary friendships, that with the family of Henry Winters Luce. Her first meeting with Dr. Luce illustrates at their loveliest this gracious woman's ways with missionary strangers. A young man then, Mr. Luce had come back after eight years at a little college far out on the coast at Tengchow, an excellent little school operating on a tiny budget. He had come home to raise money, and in Chicago he presented a letter of introduction to Mrs. McCormick. Her secretary took it upstairs and came back with a photograph of graduates of the school in 1904 and a request for word about them. Mr. Luce sat down and wrote out what he knew of the thirteen fine-looking Chinese—all in wide trousers, padded coats, skull caps. The secretary took it and brought back an invitation to lunch. After other guests had gone Mrs. McCormick began asking questions about China, but interrupted the missionary's answer: "You are tired," she said, "come with me," and showed him to her son Stanley's vacant room, sent for pajamas, and directed him to go to bed for a while. (He was one of many weary missionary folk and other workers to receive this kindly treatment.)

Later, she arranged to bring him from his modest hotel to her home. Before he left, his wife and three children, arriving from the Pacific Coast, had also found a place in Mrs. McCormick's affection. Mrs. Luce, recalling the moment, said: "That we were awkward and strange and 'queer,' after eight years in a farflung mission station in China, I make no doubt at all. . . . But coming into the room, in her own inimitable manner, instantly she seemed to gather us up and to put us in our own places within her great heart of love."

Little more was said about money in the first interview; but before long a check for \$20,000 went to the Board of Foreign Missions to apply on endowment. Mrs. McCormick of course knew of the origin of the school in a class of six boys, started in 1864 by a great pioneer Presbyterian missionary, Calvin W. Mateer, at Teng-

chow. But it was a later president, Paul D. Bergen, who had won her first pledge. At that time Dr. Bergen had a new talking point. For this little college was about to be moved to a more central point in the province, and combination with a theological school of English Baptists near by was to follow. This was one of the early unions of different denominations and nationalities to carry on Christian higher educational work in China, a principle that was to go far in the next decades.

Later chapters at Shantung have a special link with another institution, the University of Nanking. In 1908 three denominations—Methodists, Disciples, Presbyterians—in this great literary center of the Empire decided to combine their three small separate boys' schools in one institution strong enough to meet the challenge of that vital, changing time.

The arguments for this union and funds to start it were brought to Mrs. McCormick by John E. Williams, a young Presbyterian missionary of great promise who was to fulfill that promise until a martyr's death in the civil war of 1927 closed his earthly work. Mrs. McCormick responded, helped found this union school.

Two years after it opened, Mr. Williams, vice president now, was home again in the thick of a China campaign and went to see Mrs. McCormick. He was able to report sound progress and a healthy need of buildings and equipment. The night after his visit at Rush Street, Mr. Williams wrote to Dr. Speer: "I saw Madame McCormick this afternoon. She gives twenty-five thousand for a dormitory for the College group. She was deeply interested in the whole scheme and in our plans. It all came about so manifestly in answer to prayer that my little faith was rebuked again."

The next year Shantung Christian University, ready to move to Tsinan, capital of the Province of Shantung where its Medical School was already well established, won Mrs. McCormick's gift to build McCormick Administration Hall.

But before any of the promised new buildings at Shantung and Nanking were erected Mrs. McCormick had the thought of sending an American architect to China to make a group plan in the light of Chinese architecture. Others financed the employment of a Chicago architect at Nanking and Shantung. The outcome at both sites was a fine application of Chinese architectural lines to modern college buildings.

At Nanking Mrs. McCormick aided the language school for newly arrived missionaries, a pioneer undertaking. She gave about a third of the cost of a dormitory to house these students, and the way of that was deeply human. A young missionary, W. Reginald Wheeler, whom she had not met, wrote her about the need of a building because the quarters in which the missionaries studied were damp and cold. As if learning Chinese weren't hard enough they had to sit huddled in coats and rugs while they studied. There was much illness. The writer mentioned that the baby born to his wife and him had not lived; he did not stress this but told it simply, naturally. It touched Mrs. McCormick and she made her gift with warm-hearted spontaneity. This school was the first to work out successfully the language school idea.

Mrs. McCormick followed the development of these colleges, rejoicing in the accounts of transformed, redirected lives that her gifts had helped to produce; of Chinese Christian youths going out to serve as teachers or preachers or Young Men's Christian Association workers, or to take positions in provincial and national governments.

The development of the colleges into the famous Associated Colleges of China Mrs. McCormick was not to follow, nor their superb manifestation of dauntlessness in the dark years of Japanese invasion and occupation. Nor, of course, was she to know the elimination of "Christian" from these colleges, used now by China's Communist Government.

The dominant word in India was agriculture. More than in any other mission field, there was a connection here with Mrs. McCormick's own agricultural interests. For she gave agricultural machinery and land to Dr. Sam Higginbottom's great creative application of the gospel to India by way of the plow, and that development led to the introduction of still more agricultural machinery into that backward country. But the basis was broader than that—what she gave was support for a progressive agricultural Christian project.

Now this Sam Higginbottom is one of the dynamic, creative personalities of Protestant missions. Having gone out straight from Princeton, he saw a need and had a vision, and when Mrs. McCormick first met him, had come back home to realize it. Concretely, he was taking an agricultural course at Columbus, Ohio, and was

raising money to establish an agricultural department in the Allahabad Christian College. It was a comparatively new idea, and as human nature runs it might be considered surprising that its sponsor should be a woman of seventy-five. The idea was uplift—economic, spiritual—through agriculture. Mr. Higginbottom knew the terrible poverty of rural India and saw in the improvement of agriculture a thoroughly Christian way to help these people. As he understood the missionary directions of Jesus, they included far more than preaching. They enjoined action for the whole man, his health and his living conditions as well as his spirit. He therefore proposed to set up an institute for the training of Indian youth in modern methods of raising crops and breeding cattle. It was this idea, for which he was to fight long and hard, that Mrs. McCormick accepted.

Years later he was still having to persuade the theologically minded of the essential Christianity of his idea. But conceiving this to be part of what the Church was called on to do for depressed peoples, Sam Higginbottom stood fast. And Mrs. McCormick held up his hands with gifts, sympathy, and warm encouragement. She added to her loyal support of his work from year to year by sharing in the erection of a dormitory at Allahabad as a memorial to her granddaughter, Elizabeth McCormick, furnishing it, supplying a tractor and a plow for the Agricultural Institute (as it became), and maintaining three teachers for several years.

Mr. Higginbottom's project took on wide-scope developments. He had gone to serve the lowly, the outcastes (and certainly did serve them), but found himself living and working among the high castes, the princes, the wealthy. Several princes came to the Institute as pupils. Mr. Higginbottom wrote Mrs. McCormick about one of them, a very wealthy prince who brought along to school a retinue of servants and a private secretary to take notes in class. This didn't last long. "He spent a day carrying fodder to the silage cutter and now is taking work as it comes along, and writing his own notes in class."

The demonstration of what modern agriculture could do attracted the attention of several maharajahs of native provinces. One, the Maharajah of Bikaner, asked Mr. Higginbottom to make an agricultural survey and, when he consented, sent the missionary

with his wife and two children through the state in a private car, with cook and kitchen attached, on the railroads, and by motor cars, camels, horses, hunting carts where railroads were lacking. The Maharajah of Gwalior offered Mr. Higginbottom an important position and when the missionary refused to abandon his field, the Maharajah persuaded him to come as his agricultural adviser for two months a year. In return the ruler not only paid Mr. Higginbottom well but supplied the salaries of two substitutes.

Today Dr. Higginbottom is busy in retirement, but Allahabad Agricultural Institute on a union basis goes ahead strongly.

In a second mission station of North India Mrs. McCormick's money and interest promoted agriculture. This was Etah, set in the midst of a desperately poor region of villagers, largely outcasts. The object was to alleviate the terrible poverty, to lift the whole level of these lives, economic and spiritual together. Many means were employed—gardening, fruit-growing, silkworm culture, and other activities on a self-help basis—at an industrial school for boys; then a poultry farm run by an expert in agriculture. Indian eggs were small, light. Captain Arthur E. Slater, at home, came into the Board rooms asking what hen had the smallest body and laid the largest egg. The secretaries not being poultry experts, he found out at an agricultural school—Rhode Island Reds. When the project had everything lined up but the money, the Reverend A. G. McGaw, a colleague of Captain Slater, told Mrs. McCormick about it. Mr. McGaw, an evangelist, saw the great possibilities for his cause in the poultry business. Mrs. McCormick saw them too and the cables carried to Captain Slater the glad promise of substantial aid.

The first crate of chickens sent to Captain Slater was given by a Sunday school class in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. The donor had them shipped with the engaging label, "Missionaries in Feathers," and a request for good care; they went through, to the surprise of the express company, a hundred per cent alive. On the field Captain Slater developed the eggs and the education of the villagers to the point that annual poultry shows were held, attended by high officials, and the improved product contributed greatly to the support of schools and churches, as well as to the well-being of the people. Mrs. McCormick was intensely interested in it all and

needed no careful explanations of the relations between chickens and evangelism. After her time, goats were added to the program and Captain Slater still carries on.

The only scene of her missionary interest in a non-Christian country that Mrs. McCormick ever visited was on the Nile. This visit was an incident of travel, but it bore fruit visible to other travelers in later years.

On that leisurely Nile trip that she and her son Stanley took in the early months of 1896 she stopped at two of the numerous schools conducted by the American Mission of the United Presbyterian Church in Upper Egypt. Writing to friends at home, she drew a fairly dark picture of the Egyptian people, retarded, as she saw it, by the lowly position of their women:

"They cannot rise, it would seem, until the women learn how to bring up their families better, and the women, it would seem, cannot do this until they are better educated, and somewhat free from those features of the Mohammedan faith that make them practically like chattels. They do not read, they are not thought worthy to kneel in the mosques; they do not keep their homes or their children clean. Perhaps they don't know how.

"The only real light I have seen in Egypt for her growing boys is the system of schools maintained by the United Presbyterian Church of America (all honour to her) at ninety-seven stations in Egypt, such as Luxor, Assiut, Esneh, etc. . . . On visiting two of these excellent schools I found them taught by native Christian young men, and I was pleased to see the small, bright-eyed boys reading from English books like those in our schools. . . . Then the larger boys parsed an English sentence for me perfectly. Then they read from the Arabic testament. . . ."

Stopping at Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo, it was natural that Mrs. McCormick should go across to the nearby American Mission of the United Presbyterian Church and be entertained there. Her host and hostess at the Mission were the Reverend and Mrs. William Harvey, whose daughter Jessie—wife of Dr. George L. Robinson, presently to be a professor at McCormick Theological Seminary—became Mrs. McCormick's close friend.

Going on up the Nile, Mrs. McCormick visited at Assiut, center of an agricultural region. Here tourists stopped to see tombs and a bazaar. This particular tourist appears to have found greater

interest in the mission college and its able president, J. R. Alexander. The school had been founded in 1865 with a group of five pupils, in a slightly remodeled donkey stable. As the school grew, another site—on the city wall—was occupied and the numbers increased steadily. But it was still a small school when Mrs. McCormick visited and praised it.

The party stopped at Esneh, too, a little day school run by a young Egyptian named Yacoub. What Mrs. McCormick did there is best told from the angle of 1913. In that year Mrs. McCormick's sister-in-law, Margaret Fowler, visited the Nile. She was commissioned to leave with the president of Assiut College, Dr. R. S. McClenahan, a gift of ten dollars for the Turkish teacher of that little school at Esneh whom Mrs. McCormick had visited seventeen years before. It was characteristic—this flattering assumption that the president, asked to find a man, would find him anywhere in Egypt. He did, though he had only the one fact and the one name Yacoub—a common one in Egypt—to guide him. He wrote to Yacoub, who was now a merchant at Kom Ombo, mentioning only sketchily the details of that visit in order to test his identity. Yacoub's reply was convincing: he did indeed remember the American lady tourist who was going up the Nile in a dahabeah. She was "somewhat hard of hearing and used an instrument at her ear"; she gave him eye medicine and money to buy clothing for poor pupils. After he received the ten dollars, he wrote direct to Mrs. McCormick in brave English—"This kind gift made up my mind in remembrance of your very old kind visit to my school at Esneh," ending "with many kind regards and best hot wishes."

A few years later, as her acquaintance with Mrs. Robinson grew, Mrs. McCormick began to make gifts to the Assiut school, which was the only evangelical school of its grade in all Egypt for the training of young teachers, ministers, leaders. She provided a teacher for three years, contributed to the library, helped buy land, and was largely responsible for a dormitory, especially for the use of the poorer students whose needs Assiut sought to meet and who had been so crowded that they had sat "huddled like bees on the benches."

In the work of that "all round missionary" on the bleak icy coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador, Sir Wilfred Grenfell, Mrs. McCormick had a goodly share. Here the appeal came from no

clergyman, no church organization. It was the appeal of a Christian physician who, in Henry Van Dyke's words, had made "one of the most simple direct and vital applications of the gospel of Christ to human needs that modern times have seen." He had gone to a people of good English seafaring stock who had been living for years without a physician to care for them, without churches or preachers or friends—the deep-sea fishermen of these northern shores. All the world knows of this devoted life—the long journeys by dog team over snows, by steamers through ice floes, to tend the far scattered "liveyeres" of those bitter coasts or the fishermen seeking the year's support through the summer's catch. All the world knows something at least of what this "good physician" brought into being—hospitals, schools, an orphanage, cooperative stores, a seamen's institute, loom work and other industries to eke out the meager living gained by fishing and hunting, reindeer herds to supply food and clothing.

On Dr. Grenfell's visit to Chicago in 1903 he met Mrs. McCormick and she made a small contribution to his work. Later Dr. Grenfell married a Lake Forest girl, and from time to time when they were in Chicago both called to see her. Mrs. McCormick's gifts, as the years passed, mounted. Her principal aid—and it was generous—went to the school that Dr. Grenfell started at St. Anthony. When it began it was to serve a few children of the orphanage. The schools of this region were all narrowly denominational; Dr. Grenfell sought to give something better. He was so successful that the original school drew from far parts of the coasts and several others were added. The money came hard at first, since a school was so much less picturesque than hospital ships—an additional reason for Dr. Grenfell's ardent appreciation of Mrs. McCormick's aid.

It was characteristic of Mrs. McCormick that when Dr. Grenfell proposed to give the school her name, she turned the tables and provided that it should be called the Wilfred Grenfell School.

The tale, though long, is not all told, by any means. Those missionary undertakings have been chosen to which perhaps Mrs. McCormick gave most in continued interest over a long period. But the story might go on with a list of gifts in ten mission fields of her church as well as in other connections.

Mrs. McCormick deprecated credit for her share in promoting all this mission work. "I do not place a very high value upon a gift of so poor a thing as money," she once wrote. "The great help to these poor benighted nations . . . comes from the devotion and self-sacrifice of the missionaries themselves. All praise to these dear workers who have patiently, by years of fidelity, won their way to the hearts of these darkened races."

She would not have agreed with Dr. Thomas Chalmers's comment that "He who does the work is not so productively employed as he who multiplies the doers." But none of those through whom she ministered to "these darkened races" underestimated the importance of her partnership. For "how shall they preach, except they be sent?" And they all knew that along with the money that she dispensed as a steward, she gave constant prayer, loving thought, and the best of her excellent judgment. They knew that she understood and sympathized with their motives. "So many people have distorted and small ideas of what life on the mission field is," wrote a young missionary, "and their feelings toward us as we face it range all the way from frank disapproval to pity. It is, therefore, an especially helpful experience to be with one like yourself, who really sees the bigness of it all and understands our motive for wanting to be a part of the enterprise. I have never before appreciated people whose vision is truly world-wide, as I do now." ("A motive of real love of God and of their fellow man," was Mrs. McCormick's own word.) Another testified that he and a fellow missionary had left Mrs. McCormick's presence with "spirits cleansed, armor buckled on again." Surely this personal influence on the workers was no small part of her contribution toward furthering international Christianity.

As these lines are written, clouds hang dark over some of the missionary fields of Mrs. McCormick's interest, especially North Korea and China. In India there are limitations, and in all Oriental countries missionaries are aware of the threat of Communism and the pressure of new nationalisms. All missionaries, except for a few held in prison, are out of China and North Korea. Yet the picture at its darkest is not all dark. Even in China the Church still lives. The movement long in progress toward the development of an indigenous support has been forced forward prematurely, at

the cost of hardship and infinite difficulty. But a church organization carries on; a definite Christian witness exists throughout the land. And those who have seen drastic changes at rather short intervals in the past fifty years do not abandon hope.

Meanwhile, the service of the missionaries remains in the deepest sense untouched, distilled in the lives, in the transformed spirit of thousands.

Chapter 19

SERVING THE WORLD'S YOUTH

ON A MORNING late in March of 1897 a young man brought to Mrs. McCormick a work in which she was ever after to share as a creative partner. The young man, tall, grave, earnest, was John R. Mott, destined to be a world figure in international religious movements. He had just returned from a foreign tour of great significance, one that Mrs. McCormick had helped make possible, and it was the story of that tour that he told to her and to her son Cyrus in the house on Rush Street.

The journey had occupied over twenty months, covering nearly sixty thousand miles in twenty-two countries, and at the beginning of it the World's Student Christian Federation had been formed. This was a union of the five great intercollegiate movements in existence when the tour began, reinforced by six more that were created before it ended. Now student movements in North America, Great Britain, in Germany, Scandinavia, in India, China, Japan, South Africa, and in other mission lands were linked.

John R. Mott described for his two listeners the scene in the ancient Swedish royal castle of Vadstena when the Federation was launched. Here in this famous medieval stronghold a conference of students from Scandinavian countries took the necessary steps toward sharing in an international union. After they left, six men withdrew to a room high up in the castle—Luther D. Wishard and Mr. Mott from North America, a man from Great Britain, one from Germany, and two Scandinavians. In that atmosphere, with toil and prayer, these men evolved a constitution for the Federation that was to unite Christian student movements throughout the world. "Never since the Wartburg sheltered the great German reformer while he was translating the Bible for the common peo-

ple," Mr. Mott wrote later, "has a medieval castle served a purpose fraught with larger blessing to all mankind."

Mrs. McCormick saw the vast possibilities, thrilled to them, moved to meet them. But let Dr. Mott, looking back over long years, tell the story:

"I can see it as though it were yesterday. Mrs. McCormick was in bed, indisposed. She sat there propped up on pillows and said, 'Mr. Mott, this thing ought to go on. Can this thing run itself? What is your plan?'

"She pierced right into the heart of the matter—she had a marvelous mind. I don't know of a person who had that quality to such a degree, of looking all around and beyond and right into the heart. 'What is your plan?' she asked.

"I had to say that we hoped the interest of the national leaders who were enlisted would carry the organization forward.

"She said, 'That may be all right nationally, but will your international plan, the linking of these people together so they can help each other, work by itself? Ought you not to be free for this linking process?'

"'That would doubtless safeguard it,' I answered.

"'What is involved?' she asked.

"'We would need helpers in this American work,' I answered. 'I would have to have helpers in order to get time for these journeys, otherwise some people might criticise.'

"She said, 'You need money.'

"I said, 'Yes.'

"'If I would give the money would that set you free?'

"I said, 'I would thus be set free to go as occasion required to the ends of the earth.'

"She said, 'I can and will most gladly provide for that.'"

She did—generously, thoroughly, inspiringly, throughout the rest of her life.

There was a great deal of background on both sides for this conversation. Mrs. McCormick's interest in the Young Men's Christian Association as a domestic organization dates from her early married life and links into her sympathy with Dwight L. Moody's work. Before the mid-sixties, as we have seen, Mr. Moody had taken active part in the cause of the Young Men's Christian Association in Chicago. Twice, to his call for aid in erecting an

Association building, the elder Cyrus Hall McCormick had responded with a stock purchase of \$10,000. Twice the Association building burned—the first, Farwell Hall, in 1866, the second in 1871. But three years later the new building opened. And in the remaining years of his life Mr. McCormick gave annually to the work radiating from that center.

Meantime his oldest son had taken a strong hand in Association work. Cyrus H. McCormick, Jr. entered Princeton just after a Princeton student, Luther D. Wishard, had pioneered in the formation of the Intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association. Cyrus knew of it, shared in it. At home he became a director of the Chicago Association and a member of the International Committee which was formed in 1879. In February of 1881 the McCormicks opened their fine new home in a reception to this young agency in order to introduce its officials to prosperous Chicagoans. Chief of these officials was Richard C. Morse, General Secretary of the International Committee—a member of the Morse family of telegraph fame, a gentleman and a scholar, and a notable money-raiser. Mr. Morse presided, and young Cyrus, not then twenty-two—tall, dark, wearing burnsides and hair in Russian pompadour—made an earnest speech that evening about the importance and needs of the work in the colleges. How far the word "International" was from having the significance in Young Men's Christian Association work that it later acquired is shown by the range of work described that evening—work among college students, commercial travelers, German-speaking young men, colored young men, railroad men. But the McCormicks were to take large part in the extension of Association activities to truly international scope. "You have furnished the fuel," wrote Mr. Wishard to the McCormick family, "for kindling fires which are already shining around the world and shall shine as the stars forever."

This fuel for international "fires" began, according to Mr. Morse, with this reception and with the entry in the famous "little red book"—a subscription book circulated annually by the International Committee—of Mr. McCormick's signature and a thousand dollar pledge. After Mr. McCormick's death a different entry appeared—"in the name of Cyrus H. McCormick"—and the amount rose gradually to higher figures. The entry never failed during the remainder of Mrs. McCormick's life.

The movement took on its missionary aspect early in 1889, when the first two secretaries were sent on appointment to the Orient—John Trumbull Swift to Japan, David McConaughy to India. Another early phase was the four-year tour, 1868 to 1892, of Mr. Wishard to colleges of Europe, Asia, and Africa. The first college secretary, Mr. Wishard, now became the first missionary secretary to help extend the movement. He was a pioneer, a pathfinder, a man of "contagious power," and a magnetic speaker. Pioneering with him, Mrs. McCormick and her son helped to pay the expenses of Mr. Wishard's tour and on his return added influence to checks.

Meantime John R. Mott had entered upon the scene. On his graduation in 1888 from Cornell, where he had been an outstanding leader in the Christian student movement work, he had been practically commandeered for the post of Associate Student Secretary of the International Committee to carry on, with C. K. Ober, Mr. Wishard's work in his long absence on his world journey.

Touring the colleges of the United States and Canada, John R. Mott began to get a vision of the need and possibilities of a similar work abroad. The Young Men's Christian Association's foreign work had been reinforced by the launching in the late eighties at Mt. Hermon, Massachusetts of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions—an agency to secure missionary recruits among students. This had reached across the seas to various institutions. Other Christian student groups existed; but there was no world-wide Christian student organization.

In 1891 Mr. Mott made his first trip abroad, attending at Amsterdam the first world conference of the Young Men's Christian Association. Here, interviewing people right and left, getting a flood of light on what local bands of students and professors were doing in other countries, his vision sharpened and his purpose strengthened. At least twice he broached his plan, in Amsterdam to a little group gathered one evening in a tea room and in Oxford walking around the university park with Robert P. Wilder—the plan to form a union of Christian student societies throughout the world. The plan was beginning to strike root.

Somewhere in these early nineties Cyrus McCormick took John R. Mott from his own home to meet his mother, a few doors away. This visit was followed by other similar visits and a grow-

ing interest, until Mrs. McCormick was enlisted heart and soul in the cause.

Three years later Mr. Mott went to Great Britain again, this time on an invitation to aid in the student work there. Out of his tour of the great universities of Great Britain and his share in a remarkable student conference at Keswick came signal aid in the formation of the British College Christian Union and of the related Student Volunteer Missionary Union. A second link was ready for the chain soon to be forged.

During that visit Mr. Mott discussed his cherished hope of a student union with three leaders of the work in Great Britain, Germany, and France, all of whom approved. Meantime, in that summer he received invitations to attend student conferences the next year in Great Britain, Germany, Scandinavia, Switzerland, and even invitations from leaders in India and Japan, asking him to conduct campaigns among students. These invitations to aid the world-wide work for students, all independent of one another, gave Mr. Mott a deep sense that God was "working all over the map preparing the way." These were divinely opened doors of opportunity which he must enter. He resolved on a world journey. He had the endorsement of the appropriate committee of the Young Men's Christian Association; but as this was not the work of his salaried post, he surrendered his salary and raised the funds in other ways. From July 1895 until March 1897 he and Mrs. Mott were in "incessant voyage."

It was the thrilling story¹ of his journey that Mr. Mott told on that March morning in 1897.

Within a month details had been worked out by which Mrs. McCormick undertook to pay Mr. Mott's salary and expenses on an annually renewable basis.

So this remarkable partnership began. Though it can hardly be supposed that John R. Mott, having once glimpsed the Federation, would have let it fall, it was Mrs. McCormick whose farsightedness and generosity set it firmly on its young feet at the earliest possible moment. From that day in 1897 forward she walked step by step with John R. Mott through the unfolding of his work for the world's students. His executive position at that time was a

¹Published as *Strategic Points in the World's Conquest*, New York, F. H. Revell, 1897.

triple one: senior student secretary of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Associations, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, general secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation. His triple activities were closely knit.

Mrs. McCormick had a deep conviction of the enormous importance of the post Mr. Mott was filling and of its influence on the Christian development of the student world. And before the turn of the century she prepared to back her belief with an endowment. She offered \$50,000 for that purpose if her offer could be matched. For several years the matching contribution was not found; and here lies an instance of Mrs. McCormick's combination of business firmness with generosity. The man whom the hopeful Committee first approached, though he refused to invest a large sum, offered for one year the equivalent of good interest on that figure, with a strong suggestion that he would renew the gift annually. The man was John D. Rockefeller. In their exuberance the solicitors proposed that Mrs. McCormick consider this as the equivalent of her gift. Her telegraphed answer left no loophole:

"Surely you would not consider a pledge which is certain for only one year as meeting gift that would yield that sum for all time, if well invested. I do not so consider it. Would gladly extend time."

But in 1902 the offer was matched by a rival name in reaper history, Mr. Chester D. Massey of Toronto, then the head of the Massey-Harris Company. Mrs. McCormick herself had something to do with this happy arrangement. For she went, impulsively, to the great convention of the Student Volunteer Movement which was held in Toronto from February 25 to March 2 of that year. Mr. Mott had invited her and received no encouragement, but suddenly she appeared. And Mr. Mott, who already had Mr. Massey in view, promoted an acquaintance. Mr. and Mrs. Massey entertained Mrs. McCormick and Mr. Mott at luncheon. They were charmed with her and when, after Mr. Mott had introduced the subject of the proposed endowment, Mrs. McCormick became its advocate, the plan was well under way. She had a theme on which she could be eloquent, regardless of John R. Mott's feelings. In addition to her appeal, there was the giant argument of that

great convention, filling the three tiers of the Masseys' own hall. There was the argument presented by Mr. Mott's power as presiding officer and speaker.

Mr. Massey's decision was not made during the convention, but it came soon, and Mr. Mott's life work for students the world over thus had solid backing.

At the convention Mrs. McCormick was an enthusiastic listener, even though she could not hear the addresses. Seated with many others on the platform, she enjoyed looking out over the great sea of faces and with the aid of her tube she could hear singing. She wrote about it shortly after her return:

"I have just come in from the interesting meeting at Toronto, where I saw *three thousand youths* men and maidens from all the great colleges and universities of Canada and the United States. Every first-class institution, and many of the second class were represented. It was delightful to see so many youths, of both sexes, looking up at the speakers with bright young faces,—some thoughtful but nearly all free from care. When they rose to sing, led by a fine cornet, and sung: 'How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord; Is built for your faith in His excellent word,' the effect was thrilling, and well worth of itself the whole trip. . . .

"The last meeting was the greatest, when many addresses were made by such men as Earl Taylor, George Fox, Mr. Colton, Gilbert Beaver, John Mott, Robert Speer, and a host of others. At the end, the one hundred and fifty—from all denominations—who volunteered to go to the foreign field, stood up, and many of them gave their reasons for volunteering."

Through Mr. Mott—Dr. Mott, presently—Mrs. McCormick's interest reached out to many countries, many men. The range of her gifts through him, according to his own careful outline, reached over nine interests:

- "1. My personal budget—toward salary and expenses
- "2. Provision of a private secretary for me—from beginning of the plan until end of her life
- "3. My world journeys
- "4. Great creative conventions
- "5. Budgets of the causes I served. . . .
- "6. Support of Y.M.C.A. Secretaries on all continents of the world

"7. War Work Campaigns of Y.M.C.A. . . .

"8. Retirement Fund of the Y.M.C.A.

"9. Foreign Y.M.C.A. Buildings in different parts of the world not to mention literally scores of significant, isolated projects."

"Her traits as a giver," Dr. Mott once said, "must afford an example to others for all time. . . . Her administration of a great trust was an outstanding example of the right use of money. As a giver she showed statesmanship, strategy. Statesmanship was shown in her perceptions of situations and her counsel—always one went away feeling lifted and helped by her advice. . . . There was spaciousness and scope in her conceptions."

One of the foreign secretaries whom Mrs. McCormick knew best was Sherwood Eddy. The meeting at which she began to share in his work, as Mr. Eddy recalls it, was "striking, unforgettable." After fifteen years as student secretary in India, in 1911 Mr. Eddy had been called to become Secretary for Asia. In order to relieve Mr. Mott, he was to give nearly half of his time in financial work at home for the Foreign Department, the rest on the field in Asia. It was clear to him that for his home work he would urgently need secretarial help; but he also knew that a request for such aid would be a serious embarrassment to the Department. Though Mr. Eddy had never taken a salary for his work, he could not afford to add a secretary to his own budget. He had made this need a matter for prayer, and believing that it would be met, had let it slip from his mind. This was his situation when he went to a conference of student secretaries held at Lake Forest and encountered Mrs. McCormick, then living at Villa Turicum with Harold and Edith McCormick. She was in her car when some one brought him up to her. Mr. Eddy vividly recalls the incident:

"She said, 'Mr. Eddy, I have heard about your work. Where are you going?' I said, 'I am going over here to the college to attend this student gathering.' She said, 'Let me take you.' I got into her car and we started. She said, 'Mr. Eddy, I know all about your work.' This was characteristic of her. She knew everything—if I had been from Egypt or Japan it wouldn't have made any difference. 'I know all about your work. I want to do something to help you.' I said, 'I don't need any help. But,' I said, 'if you could

do something to help the Y.M.C.A. or the Presbyterian Board I would be glad.' She said, 'I am already helping the Y.M.C.A. and I am helping the Presbyterian Board. I want to help you.' I said, 'Madam McCormick, I don't need anything.' I had literally forgotten! Then to my amazement she said, 'No, Mr. Eddy, I want to help you. Will you let me give you a private secretary and pay his salary and expenses wherever you travel around the world?' Well, I nearly fell over. 'Madam McCormick,' I said, 'that is the one thing I have been praying for. But it was entirely out of my mind when I said, "I don't need anything."' She never failed to send in that money until the day she died." And the gift was continued.

Another secretary whom she held dear—both the man and his work—was Fletcher S. Brockman, for years the chief Secretary in China and at another period Dr. Mott's right-hand man and substitute whenever Dr. Mott was out of this country. Once she paid Mr. Brockman a beautiful compliment. En route to China he wired that he found himself in need of an additional \$2500 "to make more effective the important plans which have been arranged . . . by Church and Y.M.C.A. leaders in China, Manchuria, Siberia, Korea, and Japan," and asked her for the sum. Promptly she wired back: "Will gladly do this whether for you personally or interwoven with Y.M.C.A. work. Your message not clear on this point but my high regard for you overrides uncertainty."

In responding, Fletcher Brockman added to his telegraphed assurance that the money requested was for official uses these words: "Your confidence and cooperation are among the chief inspirations of my life."

Dr. Brockman's recollection of his first meeting with Mrs. McCormick furnishes a vivid example both of her intense interest in people and of the operation of her amazing memory. Known to her only through John R. Mott's words about him, Fletcher Brockman had come to interest her in an enterprise. To his surprise he found her first interest in him and his family. She had learned that he was a native of Virginia. What part of the state? Albemarle. Oh, very near the McCormicks. Where was Mrs. Brockman from? How many children? Their names? What opportunities do you have in China for their education? And so on.

In the many visits that Mr. Brockman made there afterward,

Mrs. McCormick never gave any indication of having forgotten a detail about the Brockmans. Once when he came to see her after a tour through Manchuria, Mongolia, Siberia, and Russia, she asked whether he had met the agent of the International Harvester Company in a certain Siberian town. She recalled the agent's name, told how many children he had, how splendidly he had become adjusted to the difficult conditions in Siberia, and recounted what he had told her on his last visit home. Then followed inquiries about United States officials, consuls, and ministers in different sections of the world that Mr. Brockman had covered, business people, and missionaries—some of them in remote and unfrequented places.

"As a mental feat," said Mr. Brockman, "it was remarkable; it amounted to genius. I mention it, however, not as an indication of the distinction of her intellect, but rather as characteristic of her attitude toward life. She was a student of world trends, a statesman whose opinions commanded the high regard of great leaders. . . . But she never allowed herself to think only in the terms of institutions, movements, or abstract principles. She must judge them through their effects upon people. All political parties, educational institutions, causes requiring help, even business enterprises such as the International Harvester Company, were to her first groups of individuals."

It was no wonder that she read the reports, typed, mimeographed, printed, that came to her in quantities. She had a passion for information about the world she lived in and in these reports and letters, supplemented by the talk of the writers, that world went by her in review. These leaders of youth were men of far perspectives and broad grasp, men of intellectual power and ability to express, and the times they pictured for her spanned tremendous changes. John R. Mott and Fletcher Brockman, for example, were reporting to her about China when men still sat imprisoned for days in the little cells of the vast Government examination booths and women still bound their feet. Carlisle V. Hibbard, home after intensive work in Manchuria, told her of the terrible conditions among Japanese soldiers at an army base after the surrender of Port Arthur in 1905, and the Young Men's Christian Association's effort to offer Christian ideas along with laundry soap, hot water, barbering, and medicine.

The thrill of the Chinese Revolution, when the Manchus were overthrown and the Chinese Republic was set up, came to her from more than one eager worker. Sherwood Eddy wrote from the compartment of a train in China in which he was a fellow passenger with General Sun, whose "face and hands are still scarred and burned with the explosion of that first bomb, which, like the spark of Paul Revere, set the nation ablaze."

From Constantinople Sherwood Eddy wrote when the Sultan still rode by in the streets, and whirling dervishes expressed a mystic faith, and women wore the veil. George M. Day, Sherwood Eddy, and John R. Mott wrote and spoke of the Russian students at successive periods. "The poverty, the depression, the despair, the doubt and agnosticism of these students was pathetic," wrote Mr. Eddy in 1912. "Nowhere have I met with such affection, such gratitude. It was a new experience to be kissed by rough-bearded men students, to be tossed in the air after a series of meetings, and to be given crosses, pictures, prayer books, flowers, and other tokens of gratitude by these poverty-stricken students." Both John R. Mott and Sherwood Eddy were abundantly optimistic in 1912 of the future of these students and counted, rightly, on the breadth of Mrs. McCormick's interest to include them in her gifts as long as she could be assured that the money would reach its goal.

"I am deeply interested," Mrs. McCormick once wrote to John R. Mott, "in what you are doing for the youth of the world."

Mrs. McCormick's interest in all this work for young men did not preclude her caring for and aiding similar work for young women. Her gifts to the Young Women's Christian Association extended over a long period and followed much the same pattern as in the case of the Young Men's Christian Association, though less consistently and on a much smaller scale: local beginnings—in the youth of the movement—Association House in Chicago, the salary of a Chicago secretary; special interest in the beginnings of work for employed women; later, extension all the way to international activities and Elizabeth Wilson's work as the creator of a training school in India. Mrs. McCormick knew and honored Grace Dodge, national president; had indeed long known her family; she lamented her death and made a \$50,000 gift to a memorial fund in her memory.

There had been an interval of a few years in her active interest,

perhaps only because of the changes of scene with the organization of the National Board out of two other groups. Elizabeth Wilson, then an executive secretary of the National Board, was sent to re-interest her if possible. She was received by Mrs. McCormick, who was indisposed in bed in a New York hotel, clad in an exquisite white nun's veiling negligee. Miss Wilson felt not only warm admiration but pity that Mrs. McCormick was partly shut out by deafness from the world in which she was so keenly interested. As she rose to leave at the close of an interview which had not netted contribution or pledge, she suggested prayer, if Mrs. McCormick wished. Instantly Mrs. McCormick gestured to her maid, "Augusta, kneel down! Miss Wilson is going to pray." As Miss Wilson concluded her prayer, which wasn't about the Young Women's Christian Association, Mrs. McCormick added an Amen, and then—"Augusta, get my check book—I am going to give Miss Wilson a thousand dollars."

If church missionary work and the undenominational lay work of the international student movements are separated in these pages, it is not because they were separate in Mrs. McCormick's mind or activity. Because so much of her church missionary giving was to schools, the two interests have the close bond of concentration on the needs of youth.

Indeed the later phases of John R. Mott's many-sided work in themselves were to tie together for Mrs. McCormick the missionary interests of church and of student organizations. For while continuing all of his other activities John R. Mott took the leadership in promoting union of the missionary forces of the world. He was chosen chairman of the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910, the first great international gathering of its type. Then he was asked to be chairman of its Continuation Committee, and because he believed that a "practical plan of cooperation entered into intelligently and adhered to loyally by the missionary forces of the different nations and churches would be more than the equivalent of doubling the present missionary staff of 20,000 Protestant missionaries," he consented. In his new capacity Dr. Mott set up a series of twenty-one conferences in as many areas of Asia, besides visiting hundreds of missionaries. But also, in his long-standing relation to the world student movements, he

shared with Sherwood Eddy in conducting a great evangelistic campaign among the students of Asia.

For this program, outlined in detail to her, Mrs. McCormick was one of the dozen sponsors and financial backers. Through the years she followed this broad missionary development of Dr. Mott's work. She knew when national councils were built up, until by 1921 all were woven together into the International Missionary Council, with Dr. Mott as chairman.

While all this thought and money were being given to international work, the home Young Men's Christian Association was not neglected. Buildings in several states received Mrs. McCormick's gifts in varying measure. So did summer conferences and training schools. But the foreign work—the International Committee and the organizations linked with it for her through Dr. Mott—had strongest claim on her interest. To this she gave creatively with an understanding and penetration that Dr. Mott did not hesitate to call "prophetic."

Today no Young Men's Christian Association leaders from outside are in China or in Russia. In other countries—more than seventy—the work carries on, and those who have watched the course of history through the years feel justified in the hope that China, which has changed so much and so often in a few decades, can change again from atheistic Communism to some form of freedom in politics and religion.

In 1951 Dr. Mott, still a world leader though in technical retirement, was saying: "The all-embracing World Student Christian Federation and the many related Christian Movements and Associations are facing an absolutely unprecedented world outlook—unprecedented in danger, in opportunity, and in urgency." And, referring to his own more than sixty years of travel in more than eighty countries, he said: "Through it all has been the dominant purpose to weave together in fellowship, in thought and in action all nations, all races and all communions. And to this end the central, the pervading, the dominant purpose has been to make Jesus Christ known, trusted, loved and obeyed in personal life and in all human relationships."²

² *World Communique*, April, 1951. Reprinted by permission of *World Communique* (bi-monthly publication of the World's Alliance of Y.M.C.A.'s) and Dr. John R. Mott.

PART VI
CLIMAX

Chapter 20

BIRTHDAY PARTY

ON FEBRUARY 8, 1915 there was a birthday party at 675 Rush Street. It was a surprise party to celebrate the eightieth birthday of the lady who lived there.

And it turned a burning white light on all of that lady's beneficent life—her friendships, her world-wide business interests, and above all her gifts, of money and soul, to philanthropies—educational, social, civic, and above all religious.

It reflected her truly, because one who knew the whole range had planned the observance. This was her daughter Anita, Mrs. Emmons Blaine. Choosing names carefully, Mrs. Blaine sent out invitations to a dinner, invitations to a reception, and hundreds of messages inviting cables and telegrams of greeting. These messages went to distant friends and relatives, to offices and agencies of the far-flung International Harvester Company, to faculties of schools and colleges in South and Middle West and West, to mission stations—Presbyterian, Young Men's Christian Association, or other—throughout the whole round world.

All responses came to Mrs. Blaine's address, not her mother's, and by the time that eighth of February arrived, there was a sizable pile of paper outpourings of admiration, gratitude, and love. They waited their appointed time.

The idea for the party had dawned on Mrs. Blaine early in the winter in a moment when she found her mother in a mood of depression and loneliness. Mrs. Blaine had felt, as she left her mother's room, that something must happen to lift her up. The idea grew through weeks, like a plant, larger and larger, and flowered into a plan.

Secrecy was part of it. And the secrecy held. Cyrus and Harriet McCormick came to breakfast, bringing eighty pink roses; Mrs.

Blaine handed her mother a lovely pearl locket. Presently flowers began to arrive, flowers that were to fill the house as the day passed. But there was no word of a party.

During the morning—a fine, sunny morning—Mrs. Blaine suggested a drive for the two of them, her mother and herself; Mrs. McCormick accepted; and thus time was gained for necessary arrangements at the house. Afterward Mrs. Blaine casually said: “Some people are coming in for tea. You’ll be sure to rest, won’t you?” So Mrs. McCormick had luncheon upstairs and rested. Later her daughter returned from across the street, bringing a lovely gown which she had ordered, and Mrs. McCormick’s maid, Augusta, proudly dressed her—in silver brocaded gray satin, trimmed with cream lace, silver lace, and fur.

Downstairs she stood with Mrs. Blaine near the rounded windows of the drawing room, while a long line of guests came to greet her. Shining-eyed and radiant she was, clearly enjoying the party. Graceful, supple, with a little bend forward that was more a matter of chosen posture than of burdening years, she spoke to the long line, one by one, with a special word for nearly every guest who passed, calling the names of some whom she had not seen for years. An instance was a former president of Lake Forest College, who had hardly expected her to recall him; but as she took his hand she not only spoke his name unhesitatingly but also told him how much she had enjoyed reading a baccalaureate address he had sent her—giving the title and referring convincingly to the contents. An old McCormick Harvesting Machine Company man was proud, in after years, to recall how long she had held up the line to talk with him. And another remembered happily that as he was giving his surname to Mrs. Blaine, Mrs. McCormick greeted him by his first name. These men from the factory brought with them, in charming tribute, a gift of eighty roses.

After the reception guests had gone, the honor guest was persuaded to rest in her room. When she came down again it was to a dinner. All her family were gathered, and besides these enough friends to bring the number to eighty, seated about little tables in dining room and adjoining library. Mrs. McCormick was placed as near center as possible, at a larger family table in the dining room. At the conclusion of the dinner, two of Mrs. McCormick’s

grandsons carried in a great silver tray with eighty little candles thrust into eighty little cakes. Impulsively Mrs. McCormick jumped up and began to hand the lighted cakes around to the guests.

Then came the real point of the party. Trays piled high with messages had been brought in with the cakes. Now a stereopticon was put in operation in the library and disclosed to guests gathered close about it scenes from the beginnings of time up through glimpses of Nettie Fowler in her early life as a St. Lawrence River girl, and a panorama of colleges, missions, boarding schools, or hospitals to which Mrs. McCormick had given creative aid—all against a background of piano music. And as each picture—Tusculum, Nanking, Chiengmai, Allahabad, Hastings, or whatever—flashed on the screen, the corresponding message was read out. All went well. As Mrs. McCormick saw people she knew, she would call out their names. But suddenly it seemed to dawn on her that the telegrams and cables were praising her—whereupon she stopped the performance. “Why, I haven’t done anything,” she said, “it is these other people: please play the piano.”

And that was that. But enough pictures had been shown to tell the story of love and service that had gone out to the world.

Chapter 21

HOUSE-IN-THE-WOODS

ONE of Mrs. McCormick's children felt that in some subtle way she was different in the years that remained after the memorable birthday party—more lifted above the daily scene perhaps, still more spiritual. However that may have been, the setting of her life was different. For before the end of the next year she began to occupy her own house in Lake Forest. Her children had for some time thought that as the years mounted and her strength lessened she should live out of the noise and dirt and pressures of the city. Besides, the Rush Street house was filled with the past and they did not like finding her, tired and dusty-fingered, working among old papers, old things in her storerooms. Perhaps they did not understand her satisfactions in that occupation. However, when Mrs. Blaine broached the subject of a country house, her mother fell in with the idea.

The choice was Lake Forest, which she knew so well. A lot was selected on Sheridan Road and Mrs. Blaine supervised the planning and building of a house, to be her mother's "own corner and beauty spot out of the city." Mrs. McCormick had a voice in it all, calling for changes and greatly enjoying the whole proceeding. There was, to be sure, a little stretch of time in which she felt overwhelmed by the "elaborateness" of the house and shrank "from having so complicated and valuable an estate to manage and live in," especially at past eighty. But Mrs. Blaine's reassurances were persuasive, though while it was going up Mrs. McCormick called it "Anita's house." Eventually, however, it was her own.

House-in-the-Woods, as Mrs. Blaine named it, is a lovely house, artistically designed, arranged for perfect comfort as well as charm and set in a forest of its own. A tea-house stands at a pleasant distance; there is a walled garden where Mrs. McCormick

often enjoyed outdoor meals even in winter, and fine paths through the woods provided means of daily outing for her in wheel chair or little electric runabout. Visitors were sometimes sent out for this form of relaxation, Dr. Wilfred Grenfell for instance. He told the story:

"When I arrived from Labrador to see her at her invitation, the first thing she said was, 'You look tired, you must rest a bit before we talk.' She immediately called for her secretary, an elderly gentleman with grey hair, told him to get her bath chair, put me into it and wheel me round the garden. One saw at once that there was no arguing, so I mounted the very comfortable contraption, and allowed the old gentleman to push me out of sight. Then we came to terms that one good turn deserves another. But the whole thing gave me the rest I needed, and, what is more, when I went back Madame McCormick at once knew that I had got what she wanted. . . ."

The house was finished and furnished in time for its mistress to begin living there in October, 1916—not very far from Villa Turicum, the home she had shared with Harold and Edith nor from Walden, Cyrus H. McCormick's estate. She delighted in this exquisite place, but she often went in to spend days or even weeks in her long-loved Rush Street home. And in six of her remaining years she traveled, on physician's orders, to the softer airs of California, living in Pasadena or Coronado through the weeks of late winter and spring. These California intervals were spent chiefly in rented houses that gave her every luxury and beauty of environment.

Family interests, family events crowded thick in these late years. There were careers to watch developing, there was family participation in the First World War to draw on a motherly heart. There were births, marriages, divorce, deaths in the immediate circle.

It was a deep satisfaction to Mrs. McCormick that her grandson Cyrus McCormick, after graduation at Princeton and study at Oxford, entered the family business, beginning as a salesman, rising through various posts to be vice president of manufacturing in next to the last year of his grandmother's life. She was gone long before his career ran in another channel.

Emmons Blaine, who like his father was a graduate of Harvard, went on to study engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology. When he announced his decision to practice as an engineer his grandmother was distressed. "Has Emmons ever had the work of 'The International' pressed upon him?" she asked her son Harold. "As a grandson of the inventor of the Reaper Emmons would naturally gravitate to the business of the family." But he didn't and there was nothing to do about it, especially as his mother would have opposed "pressing" anything upon him. By the time Gordon McCormick elected to be an architect, his grandmother apparently did not object. His interest in architecture was, indeed, in a way celebrated by a gift of "Mrs. Cyrus H. McCormick, Sr. and her sons and grandsons" to erect a building at Princeton for the school of architecture—McCormick Hall. She would have been glad to foresee Fowler McCormick following in the steps of his uncle and his father as successively President and Chairman of the Board of the International Harvester Company.

Three of the grandchildren married during Mrs. McCormick's lifetime. Cyrus was deeply disappointed because his adored grandmother was too ill after her eightieth birthday party to come to his and Dorothy Linn's wedding a few days later. She could not venture on the long, cold trip when Emmons Blaine went, in winter time, to Portsmouth, New Hampshire to marry Eleanor Gooding, in the same church in which her minister father and mother had been married thirty years before. The young people had met in Chicago when Eleanor was visiting a school friend and, according to Mrs. Blaine, "it was settled in the heavens then & there."

Mrs. McCormick welcomed her new granddaughters-in-law warmly. Remembering her own emotions when her children married she felt sympathy with Mrs. Blaine in the separation from her son in the companionship of daily life, as well as in her joy at gaining a daughter.

Late in her life Mrs. McCormick's youngest grandchild, Harold's and Edith's daughter, Mathilde, became engaged very young, to Max Oser, a Swiss cavalry officer of forty-five—creating family tensions and furnishing a sensational morsel for the newspapers. How gallantly Mrs. McCormick met the situation when they married abroad, is shown in a telegram to the young bride's father: "Please cable Mathilde following: 'Am with you in spirit on your happy wedding day. My dear love to Max. Grandmother.'"

In the midst of the "punitive expedition" against Mexico in 1916, Mrs. McCormick's niece, Kate Fowler, married Van Santvoord Merle-Smith, seven days before Squadron A of the New York National Guard to which he belonged was sent to the border. The next year Marjorie Fleming, Mrs. McCormick's great-niece, married his cousin, Wilton Lloyd-Smith, then a lieutenant in the Army.

Each marriage took place on short notice and Mrs. McCormick rushed to New York to be present. She felt she was the representative of her brother.

Both of the young men were later in long intensive action. Wilton Lloyd-Smith was a captain of artillery; Van Santvoord Merle-Smith, a captain of infantry in the famous "Rainbow Division," with a delayed promotion to major following before he left France.

Three of Mrs. McCormick's four grandsons were in war service too—Cyrus McCormick a lieutenant in the air force, "taking care of the construction of aeroplanes," his grandmother said; Gordon McCormick an officer of instruction in artillery, and during the closing weeks of the war exposed to fire while serving as aide to General Charles H. Martin; and Emmons Blaine in engineering at the shipyards near Philadelphia. Even the youngest, Fowler McCormick, still a student at Princeton during the war, had driven an ambulance in France in the summer of 1916.

Within less than a year after his marriage Emmons Blaine fell a victim to the influenza that raged in 1918. The tragedy of his death, so young, so promising, struck deep in Mrs. McCormick's heart, not only for herself but for her beloved daughter in the loss of her only child.

A few weeks after his death there came, in solace, the birth of his little daughter Anne, with Mrs. Blaine giving herself utterly in the fight for life at the hospital and in a following period of care in her own house. Later, Mrs. McCormick wrote: "Our dear Anita—since the happy world in which she moved and lived was despoiled by the great despoiler—has inherited another world which has absorbed her great loving nature—and that is Emmons' dear Eleanor, and Emmons' dear daughter. With these beloved ones she is occupied, and while it can never be supposed she is entirely *happy*, yet she would never let you say that she was not perfectly so, in her

great love for the two priceless interests that have happily fallen into her arms."

In her remaining years Mrs. McCormick delighted in this her one great-grandchild, seeing the little girl often. "The best enjoyment I can now have," she wrote, "is to go to my daughter's house and there have a little visit with my great-granddaughter, who is so full of sweetness and good nature." (This was the child Nancy—Anne Blaine, who as Mrs. Gilbert A. Harrison was to be the mother of Mrs. McCormick's great-great-grandsons, David Blaine and James Louis Harrison.)

Another grievous loss came in the death of Harriet McCormick in 1921. Mrs. McCormick wrote from Lake Forest to her son Cyrus on the day of his wife's death, January 17:

"My dear son—my dear first-born:

"In our sorrow we do feel that for our dear one it is well! She has reached the heavenly shore and breathes the air of immortality. Silence and pain broods over our hearts, but she is happy in God's presence and in the love of Jesus Christ; and she is with darling Elizabeth, our beloved child.

". . . For me there is no comfort save as my disturbed spirit puts trust in God. It seems but a day since Harriet came to tell me of going to the hospital. As it seems to me now, she was speaking from the threshold of the heavenly home. It is all so unreal. God is the only comfort now, and there we will anchor our burdened souls."

Still another personal situation that drew heavily on Mrs. McCormick's motherly feelings was that of Harold McCormick and his family. In 1913 Harold, Edith, and their three children went abroad. From that year on into 1922 Harold and the children moved back and forth—Harold west on business, east to be with his wife, or to bring some one of the children home. Edith McCormick did not return for eight years. She was held in Switzerland by the need she felt to continue treatments under Professor Jung, famous psychoanalyst. Harold McCormick reported back happily on her progressive release from fears and resistances and told of his own interest in this way of thinking. Without being able to follow along with her son and daughter-in-law in their new views, Mrs. McCormick nevertheless gave them sympathy. Whenever the children were in Chicago, she enjoyed them greatly, welcoming the

visits of Muriel and Mathilde, and seeing Fowler often in his vacations from Groton and Princeton.

But the concern that she felt over the long absences, over her adored son Harold's separation from family and business, was a strain, and a strain heightened in the war years when her eagerness for his return was checked by fear to have him cross the sea. She was deeply interested in a program for peace that he evolved and had printed—a plan for the daily publication by both sides of their peace plans. Though it was not adopted, this sincere *Via Pacis* attracted considerable attention. Mrs. McCormick, eager to make her son's work known, sent copies to President Wilson, to members of Congress, and to others in high position.

When at last Edith McCormick returned to Chicago late in 1921, the marriage was finished. She went to the great stone house on Lake Shore Drive while Harold on his return occupied his house in Lake Forest. A few months later divorce confirmed the end of a marriage that had held much beauty and happiness. It was a grief to Mrs. McCormick, not only for the break in her son's life, but for the loss to her of Edith with whom in earlier years she had been so congenial and whom she loved.

Within a year Harold and Ganna Walska, Polish opera singer, were married in Paris. When a few months later they remarried under Illinois law, it was in Mrs. McCormick's house in Lake Forest. In this home Ganna Walska was warmly welcomed, as indeed was every one who entered Mrs. McCormick's family by marriage. She wrote to a relative: "While we might wonder at the basis of Harold's choice of home maker, we think there is no flaw in Harold's true devotion and singleness of heart and principle." Years later Harold McCormick said: "Ganna liked Mamma ever so much, but it was not expressed in companionship—it was more philosophical and theoretical. But I have seen them together—Ganna would play up to Mamma like one child to another, and Mamma would respond. I think that would be the point of view—not to . . . get into deep water. But Mamma was always fine."

How had the mounting years changed this woman? Her hair was white now, the soft skin somewhat wrinkled. But she still had distinction in looks, with a radiant sweetness of expression, and she still moved with grace. Her mind had keenness. She had her lifelong zest for facts and loved to pursue them, night being just as

acceptable as daytime for the purpose. For the habit of reading or working in the night, when she could not sleep, persisted. Often she went to bed with a slip of paper under her pillow and a pencil at hand, to catch a stray night-borne idea.

Mrs. McCormick's economical tendency was perhaps more marked in the late years. At least the cook found it hard to meet the requirement of bills down and hospitality up. And she was loath to spend money on herself. In these years, therefore, both to save her strength and to make sure she had suitable clothes, Mrs. Blaine chose and ordered for her lovely things: the daintiest embroidered muslins, in white, gray, mauve for summer, an abundance of warm things for winter; including the type of bonnet with ties, sometimes trimmed with ostrich tips, that she habitually wore.

People who recalled their impressions of her in the later years smiled as they thought of certain little characteristic ways. There was a habit of clearing her throat before she spoke, especially perhaps if what she was about to say had a flavor of admonition. Another habit was to take choice portions from her plate at table and have them deposited, willy-nilly, on the plate of a guest. As the food at her table was abundant, the recipient sometimes was unhappy. Incidentally, she was throughout her housekeeping a wonderful carver. She was not one to remain uninformed about the location of joints and the correct way to slice roasts—nor about anything else in the range of skills called for in a woman's life. Still another characteristic action was to remove the hearing tube from her ear when she had heard enough—an action that of course left the talker helpless.

Always she had the devoted care of those in her service. Some had been with her for years—all adored her—not because they were highly paid, either, or even promptly paid until the late years when that matter was put on a business basis. Her kindness and pleasant ways, her care of them in illness, and their admiration for her held them close. Some of them were there for decades. One was William Hansen, coachman from Mr. McCormick's time and for years houseman, until illness made him inactive. It was William who was often called upon to go forth deep in the night to take a cab and carry to the main post office letters that his mistress held urgent. Mr. Gorton, already referred to, sometimes performed the

same service. Caroline Swenson was cook or general house worker for about fifty years, with intervals. In old age and illness she was cared for by Mrs. McCormick in a hospital.

Outstanding was the devotion of Augusta Carlson, Mrs. McCormick's personal maid for twenty-five years—Augusta to whom Mrs. McCormick was "next to Him above." She watched over and protected her mistress regardless of time or effort. Together she and Mr. Gorton, watchdog of her interests, spared her all possible strain. In several of her final years she had the additional protection supplied by an arrangement that Mrs. Blaine managed tactfully to achieve—the constant care of a nurse-companion, Miss Elizabeth Bostater for a large part of the time.

Though she obeyed directions and spent many hours out-of-doors, Mrs. McCormick was by no means idle at House-in-the-Woods. All of the chief interests to which she had given so much of herself as well as her means were carried on right through the later years. Checks continued to go out to causes already named, to many others which there is not room to mention. College men and missionaries, ministers, Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. leaders, spokesmen of reforms, social and civic, came to the house on Sheridan Road in person, by telephone, and by letter, as they had done to Rush Street (and continued to do when she was in Chicago)—only in lesser numbers. For family and staff united to save her from too many drains on her strength. Perhaps she did more in the familiar setting of Rush Street. At any rate she wrote in 1920: "You would be surprised to know the number of decisions reached on various things down here at Rush St. and the achievements I have made in getting things done." But even in the California intervals, with the aid of a stenographer and the nurse-companion, Mrs. McCormick kept up her voluminous correspondence, though she wrote fewer letters now in her own hand. She had a certain amount of social life too. "We have kept up our social privileges," she wrote, "receiving our close friends . . . sometimes at luncheon, and sometimes for tea." But at another time she reported that she saw no one, heard nothing, and even if these words exaggerated, one gathers the impression that there were lonely stretches in her Lake Forest days. "This place in the woods," she wrote once, "you might rightly infer is a kind of solitude, and there is a certain isolation that makes it easy to rest when

we are commanded to rest by the powers that be. And as long as they have sway, we do keep to the truth in saying that this is a kind of 'Sleepy Hollow.' " Her son Harold called the place "The House of Peace."

Among the representatives of causes that have been left in earlier pages as unfinished stories was Dr. Barend H. Kroeze, president of Jamestown College up in the bitter Dakota cold. It was he who started this school on a new course, along which Mrs. McCormick went with him. "I want you to know," Dr. Kroeze once wrote, "that this college is the product of your work and thought and gifts."

Dr. Kroeze gave Mrs. McCormick an unprecedented experience. When she pledged the money to build Taber Hall, her secretary warned that there must be no coming back for more. Time passed. There was no added request. The building went up. And Dr. Kroeze came to Mrs. McCormick with an itemized statement of the cost. To it was pinned a check for \$33.08. "What's this?" asked the secretary. "It's the unused remains of the \$39,000." Mrs. McCormick, hearing the story, was amazed—and promptly gave Dr. Kroeze a thousand dollars more. "There must be something," she said, "that has been omitted."

An institution that held her interest through the years, reaching higher levels during her Lake Forest period, was a religious agency for Americanization. Its beginnings, in 1852, were in the home of the pastor of the German Presbyterian Church of Dubuque, Iowa, who felt a deep urge to train German young men to evangelize German immigrants in the Mississippi Valley. His idea blossomed into a German Theological Seminary, a college, and finally the University of Dubuque.

The Reverend Cornelius M. Steffens, becoming president in 1906, brought its needs and his troubles to Mrs. McCormick soon after. She fully appreciated the service to this country of a school where many nationalities mingled, held by a common faith and patriotism. Among other things, a fine gymnasium on the campus attested her interest.

New causes were adopted too in these later years. Of these we choose two or three of special interest. On a day in the summer of 1915, when Mrs. McCormick was past eighty, a woman physician visited her at Lake Forest. She was Dr. Josephine E. Young, Medi-

cal Adviser of Women at the University of Chicago and Medical Officer of the School of Education, which Mrs. Blaine had founded. And her cause was the creation of a school for the study and training of defective children at the Orthogenic Clinic that Rush Medical College had for a short time conducted.

Dr. Young, looking back in memory, saw Mrs. McCormick standing on a lawn of the house that was in process of building, wearing a dark dress and a dark bonnet with rather a wide brim. It was Dr. Young's first impression—"a very intelligent conscientious old lady who earlier in life must have been unusually beautiful, and was still exceptionally fine and distinguished in appearance." Mrs. McCormick listened attentively to Dr. Young's presentation. Then she turned to her daughter, Mrs. Blaine, who was at hand, and said, "Would you undertake this?" Mrs. Blaine replied: "Why Mother, if you would like it, I think it would be a beautiful thing to do." That was weighty influence.

Mrs. McCormick soon provided enough to found and support the school with psychologist, teacher, caretaker, and quarters. A five-room flat on the West Side was the choice, and here Mrs. McCormick more than once visited, inspecting food, dishes, curtains and all. When changes in personnel became necessary, she interviewed and consulted with much the same zeal, at this advanced age, with which she had handled similar problems years before.

Had she lived a few years longer, she would have seen the burden taken over by the University of Chicago. In that connection the school still goes on, though its work is directed to a different type of children—to the delinquent and emotionally disturbed.

Another fresh interest of these later years—though one into which she did not enter so deeply—was the Utica Normal and Industrial Institute, a school for Negro boys and girls in Mississippi. Its patient principal, William H. Holtzclaw, did not succeed in getting beyond Mrs. McCormick's secretaries and attendants for some years. But one day as Mrs. McCormick was reentering House-in-the-Woods after a drive, she heard his name spoken—he was in a room near the entrance—and called out, "Oh, Mr. Holtzclaw! Let me speak to Mr. Holtzclaw!" "Of course," said he in telling the story, "I got right up and raced out." There was a good talk, in which she spoke much of his autobiography, *The*

Black Man's Burden and asked searching questions about his work.

Mr. Holtzclaw had left Tuskegee imbued with Booker T. Washington's idea of "teaching and sacrificing." He took a public school down at Utica in Mississippi, where he was to be principal at \$32 a month and there was one other teacher, and seventy-five pupils. Within a month there were 125 pupils, and when the county refused to hire another teacher, Mr. Holtzclaw hired one, giving up his salary.

Presently young people wanted to come from other parts of the state to board. A cottage was built; Mrs. Holtzclaw, trained in home economics, set up the boarding department and practical instruction in housekeeping. Step by step expansion followed. Buildings went up, scholarships were collected.

Mrs. McCormick saw Mr. Holtzclaw several times and made helpful gifts. Her kindness in seeing that he always was taken to the station in her car impressed him as setting her apart from the average.

Probably, as always, industrial work and self-help and sacrifice appealed to Mrs. McCormick. No doubt Mr. Holtzclaw's fine personality won her. Though she did not feature gifts to schools for his race, she did give to several, enough to show a warm human interest.

For nearly fifty years Mr. Holtzclaw guided the school he had started. Though after his death the Institute became the Hinds County Colored Agricultural High School, it is still the Utica Institute, following the aims of its founder.

Still another new interest of the later years was the College of the Ozarks at Clarksville, Arkansas. It was like a fresh start on Mrs. McCormick's interest in Tusculum—a Presbyterian mountain school in Arkansas meeting the same needs there that Tusculum met in Tennessee. Her gifts, made in response to an appeal from an official of the Presbyterian College Board, were in the field of such prosaic necessities as lifting mortgages and meeting deficits. A new president, Dr. Hubert S. Lyle, had gone in at about the time of Mrs. McCormick's first gift. Acquaintance by letter followed; then came a morning visit to House-in-the-Woods.

Dr. Lyle had come from that part of Tennessee which Mrs. McCormick knew and loved. He told her an interesting story of a school, formerly Cumberland Presbyterian, which was operating

on a self-help plan because money was very scarce in this mountain area. He told of the sacrifices the young people made to come to school, and how tuition was often in terms of cows and hogs and labor of all kinds. A general building was sadly needed. Mrs. McCormick made Dr. Lyle then and there a conditional pledge of \$25,000 to help build it. It was built and \$10,000 more, promised in Mrs. McCormick's last year, was paid by her heirs.

A late-life interest was the Farmers Federation, a cooperative project started in 1920 by James G. K. McClure, Jr., son of the President of McCormick Theological Seminary. Having gone to Asheville, North Carolina for his health, he got the idea of organizing cooperative markets to help the people of the mountains, where the net yearly cash income of a family was \$86, to help themselves. During her last years Mrs. McCormick paid the salary of a man to assist Mr. McClure in the expanding work, furnishing for that period all the promotion expenses for the whole undertaking. The Federation has been very successful in developing markets for poultry, eggs, farm and forest products—aiding in another way the people for whom Mrs. McCormick had done so much through the schools she fostered.

Though there is in Mrs. McCormick's papers no indication that she took any share in business decisions in these later years it is evident that she watched, kept informed. In 1916, for instance, when there was a strike in the Tractor Works, from California she followed the newspaper accounts and got first-hand word from her son Cyrus. She was anxious to the extent that she was ready to "start home at a moment's notice." But copies of letters between himself and other officials that he sent her and his own letters were reassuring, and she was proud of his "policy of patiently handling the men—and gaining their better natures."

The Government's suit against the International Harvester Company was a distress to Mrs. McCormick for several years—beginning before House-in-the-Woods became home. Suits had been brought in state courts in the first few years of the International's life with varying outcomes, none very serious. While a Federal suit loomed, the Attorney-General conferred with the Company in an effort to bring about a voluntary dissolution. But all the plans suggested to the Company involved the separation of McCormick and Deering interests, and this the Company would

not accept. So in April, 1912 suit was entered in the Circuit Court for the District of Minnesota. The Sherman Act of 1890, under which it was brought, had not often been invoked in its first decade and was considered rather a dead letter. But the growing power of great corporations brought a growing demand for their control, particularly in the policies of Theodore Roosevelt as candidate and president.

During President Taft's administration, proceeding on the Roosevelt lines, United States Steel, the American Tobacco Company, the Sugar trust had been challenged and judged. The International Harvester's turn came next. The defendants produced 1146 witnesses, and when in August, 1914 an adverse decision was rendered (two judges adverse, one favorable), there had been no evidence of injustice to farmers or to consumers. The mode of forming the company twelve years before was what won condemnation: the combination of five companies, holding 85 and 90 per cent of the trade in the two principal lines of harvesting machinery, constituted a monopoly. This was a "good trust," but a trust capable of injuring and oppressing.

It was hard for Mrs. McCormick to take—first the suspense, then the decision itself. A few weeks before the opinion was announced she wrote: "Every day has brought more work than I could finish; and the expected report of the three judges not yet handed in, in our law suit with the Government—a suit that we might easily have avoided if we had been wary—our suspense is very trying." She found comfort in an editorial of the *New York Times* which criticised the court for going beyond the legal aspects of the case into what the *Times* considered the economic and moral aspects. "The brief of the Govt.," she wrote, "took the position that, if the Harvester Co is not dissolved there will soon be a great swarm of combinations following. The *New York Times* says the Supreme Court has nothing to do with that side of the question.—They have only the *legal* side to act upon." Then Mrs. McCormick added: "If we had made an outright purchase of the Deering, and then proceeded about the business in hand—without any combine, we would have gone on, scot free— . . . without molestation." But at the time, 1897, she had not been enthusiastic about the proposed purchase.

An appeal was taken by the International Harvester Company to the United States Supreme Court, two hearings were held, and a third was scheduled when the First World War intervened. The Government asked a postponement of all such cases, the International consented, and in October, 1918 it withdrew its appeal and proceeded under the ruling of the Circuit Court. Though it secured some modification, this involved offering for sale lines of three of its companies and two of its plants and limiting its representation in each community to one agent.

But the United States Government was not satisfied with the results and in the month of Mrs. McCormick's death it asked the District Court for further relief. This was denied. The United States then appealed to the Supreme Court. The final outcome in 1927 was a dismissal of the appeal, a "unanimous opinion holding that competitive conditions existed in the harvesting machine industry."

So for Mrs. McCormick the strain ended in 1918; for about six years she thought of the International Harvester Company as "beleaguered," and in 1920 she wrote of "the pressure of injustice such as we have suffered from the Government of the United States through the past years."

The experience of voting came to Mrs. McCormick in these late years. By grace of the advanced position of Illinois it came to her earlier than to a majority of her countrywomen. For in 1913 Illinois women were empowered to vote for presidential electors and most other officers. Mrs. McCormick registered. Her first vote in a primary for mayor went for William Hale Thompson, "who," she said, "opposes any idea of Tammany in Chicago." This was in 1915. Some of "Big Bill the Builder's" other ideas must have become clear to her later, for, though there is no record as to whom she voted for when Thompson ran in 1919, by 1923 she definitely was not supporting him. She was on record for William Dever, a Democratic reform candidate, who won.

On the national level she did not waver. Though she had no vote in 1912, she made a sizable contribution to Woodrow Wilson's campaign fund, and in 1916 she contributed, voted, and sought to win votes for him. In later years, when Wilson was no longer active, she still contributed to the Democratic National Committee.

In 1920 the international issue, to which her daughter Mrs. Blaine gave herself ardently, no doubt controlled, and presumably she voted for Cox and the League of Nations.

She contributed liberally to the campaign of Charles E. Merriam, Republican reform candidate for mayor in 1911, whom Harrison defeated. And Mary McDowell had her support in a successful campaign for County Commissioner in 1914. Evidently she was not bound to a party, though her husband, whose course in general she followed, was a stout Democrat.

Her attitude toward woman suffrage had been rather neutral. Definitely not a suffragist, she was definitely not opposed. When in 1916 a suffrage meeting and parade took place in Chicago and Harriet McCormick gave a dinner for about a hundred suffrage leaders in her home, Mrs. McCormick was a guest—and an admiring one. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, and others spoke. "The women were of a fine class, serious-minded, educated, refined, superior, I think, in understanding to the same number in the fashionable circles of this country."

Mrs. McCormick's last Christmas holidays—1922—had a lovely touch in that the special guests of this lady of nearly eighty-eight were three young men. They were students: William and Wallace McClenahan, sons of the president of Cairo University, in whom she had long been interested, and Luther Wright Mott, grandson of the Luther Wrights of Oswego, New York, friends of Mrs. McCormick's Clayton family. She was sharing in the education of these boys and keeping in close, warm-hearted touch with their progress. She liked to entertain young people. Once she wrote: "The young are not hard to entertain! We meet on very pleasant ground." So she enjoyed these young men. "Our Christmas was quite exciting," she reported. "We feel a little lonesome now."

When in February, under doctors' orders, she left Chicago for California, she wrote of her regret at putting more miles between herself and her young friends and added: "We will keep the mails heavily loaded with news going to you from the Pacific."

In June Mrs. McCormick was again in Lake Forest. Then, late in the month, in a time of poor weather, she took a cold which would not yield. Something like a mild pneumonia developed. Her doctor came, watched, other physicians were called. Sons and

daughter stayed close at hand. The nurse-companion who had been with her was summoned from her home in Ohio.

Early in the morning of July 5 morphine brought relief from great restlessness. She quieted and apparently slept. Suddenly she looked up as the nurse was counting her pulse, took firm hold of her hand and said three times, "How lovely!" She slept again and did not waken. As Anita, Cyrus, Harold stood beside her bed, about eleven o'clock in the morning without pain or struggle her life passed.

THE END

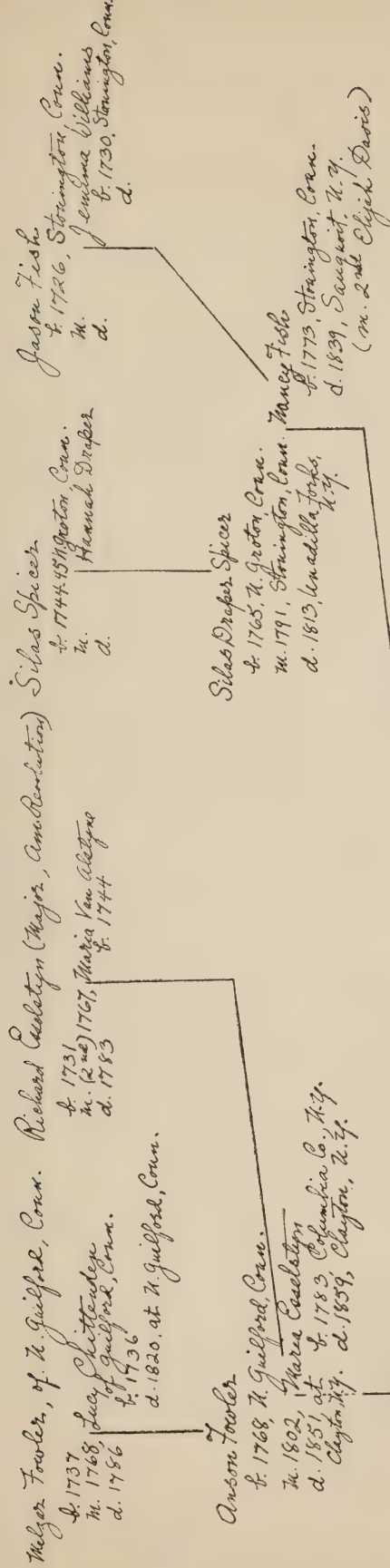
NOTE ON SOURCES

SINCE the manuscripts on which this biography is based are not now, as it goes to press, so located as to be readily accessible, detailed references are not given. Such references, however, will be filed with a copy of the manuscript, in connection with Mrs. McCormick's papers.

The references include not only manuscripts but books and, of more significance, all manner of unbound printed matter associated with Mrs. McCormick's interests and forming part of her papers. It is thought inadvisable to separate the various types of sources by listing here the books and such other printed matter as a patient researcher might find outside of Mrs. McCormick's collection.

Mrs. McCormick's papers have recently been lodged in the McCormick Collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, with the papers of her husband.

Ancestry of Nancy Maria Fowler



Nancy Maria (Nettie) Fowler
b. Feb. 8, 1835, at Brownville, N.Y.

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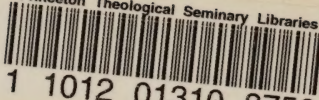
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